No. 11

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Critters

FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

Critters

No. 11 April

SPECIAL 1987 CHRISTMAS ISSUE!

◄ USAGI YOJIMBO ►
"Homecoming, Part II"
by STAN SAKAI
A battle with the Mogura Ninja, and some sweet memories to savor...
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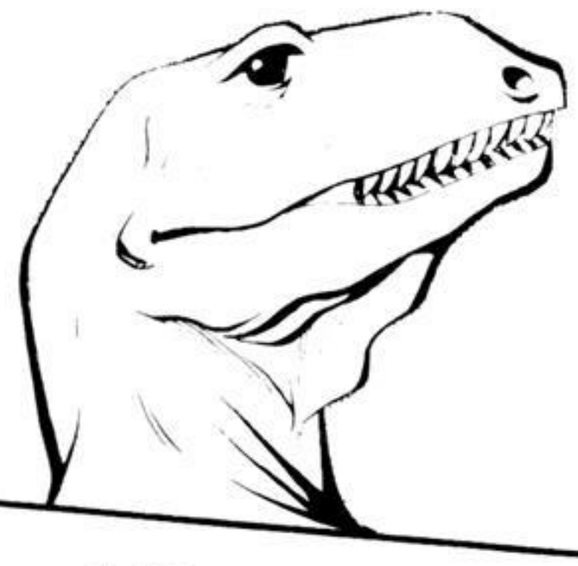

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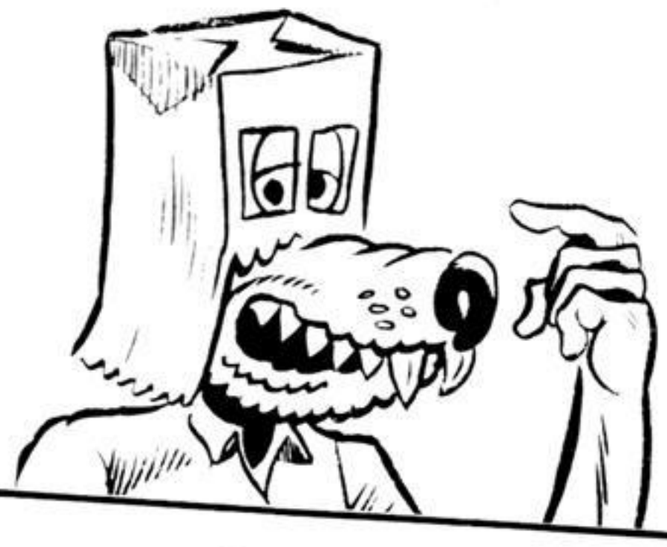

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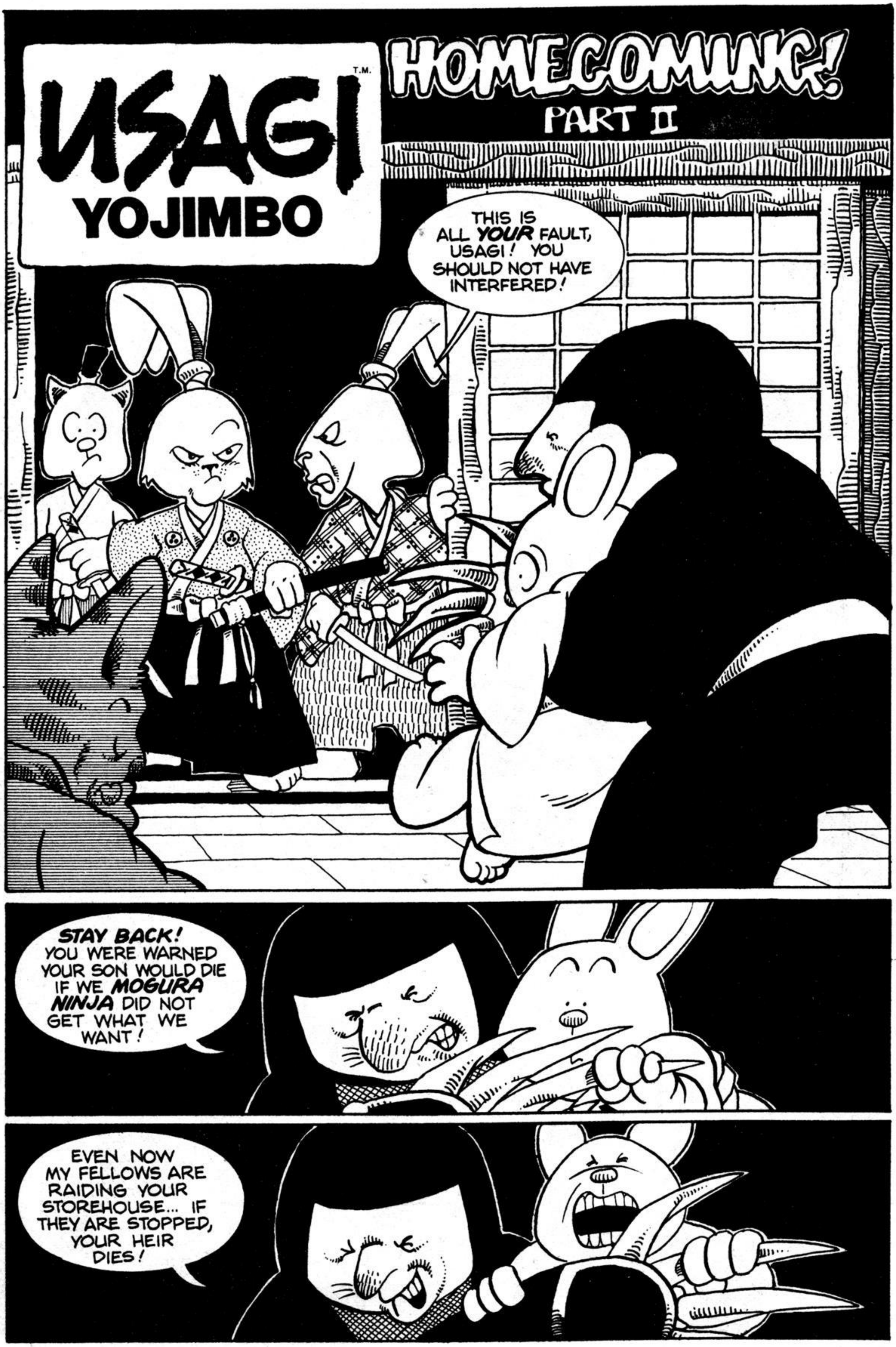
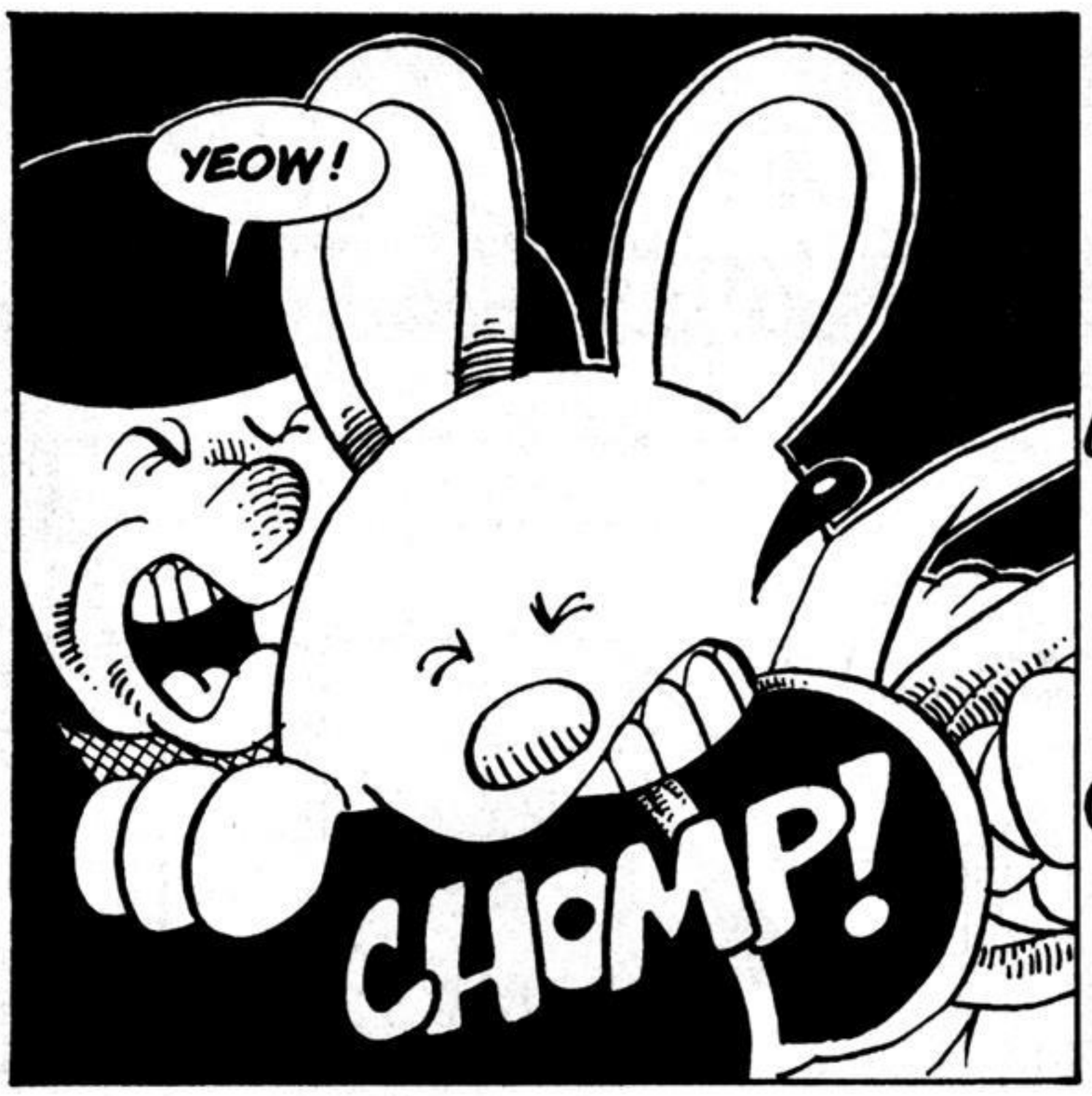
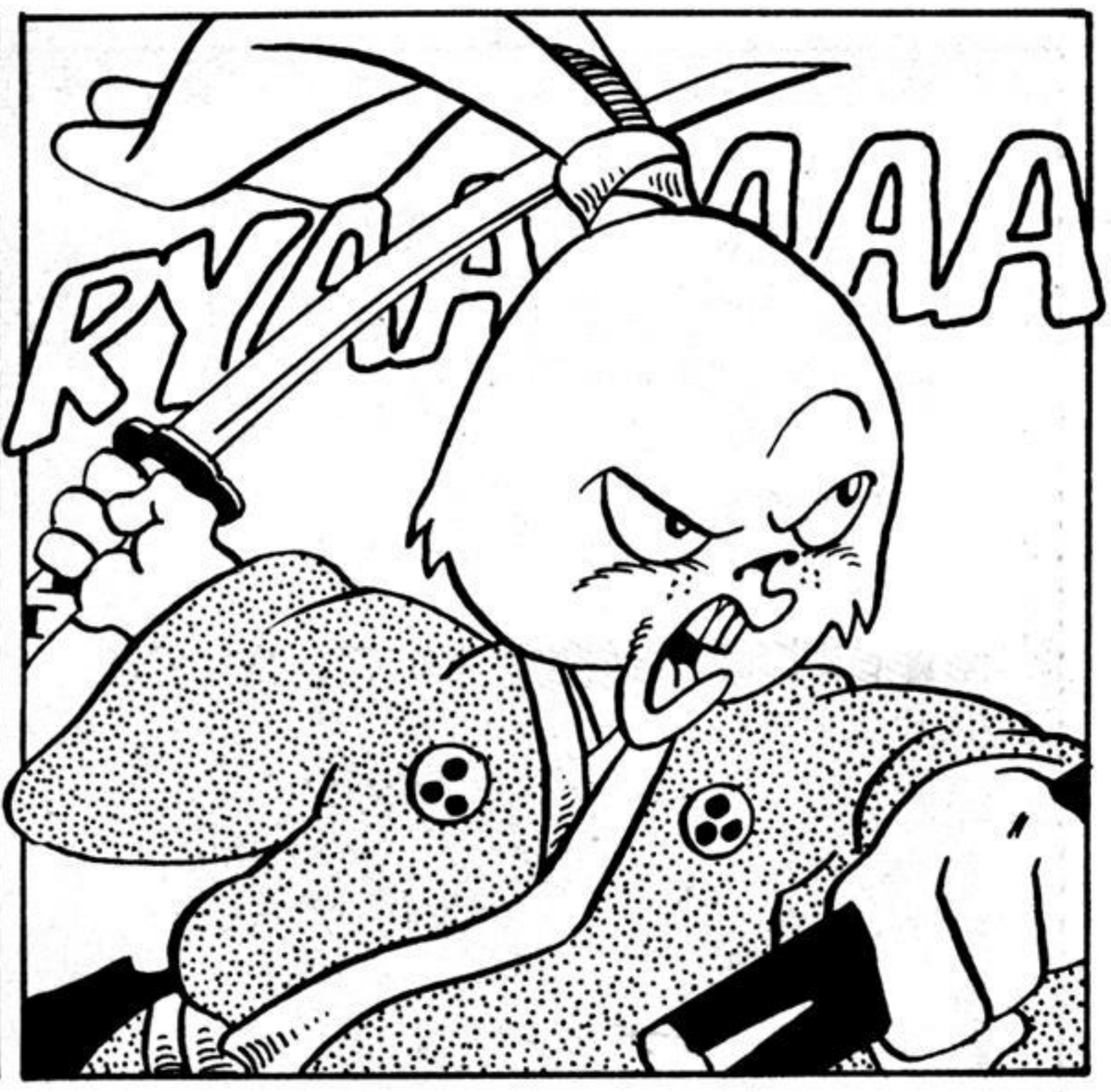
CRITTERS #11, April, 1987. **Critters** is published monthly by Fantagraphics Books, Inc., and is copyright © 1986 Fantagraphics Books, Inc. All characters, stories, and art © 1986 their respective creators: Mark Armstrong, John Holland and Ronald Wilber, Mike Kazaleh, Sam Kieth, Steve Lafler, Ken Macklin, Freddy Milton, Stan Sakai, Tom Stazer, and Ty Templeton. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without written permission from Fantagraphics Books and the creators. No similarity between the any of the names, characters, persons, and institutions in **Critters** and those of any living or dead persons is intended, and any such similarity that may exist is purely coincidental. Letters to **Critters** become the property of the magazine and are assumed intended for publication in whole or in part, and may therefore be used for those purposes. First printing: December, 1986. Available directly from the publisher for $3.50 + 50¢ postage and handling: Fantagraphics Books, 4359 Cornell Road, Agoura, CA 91301.

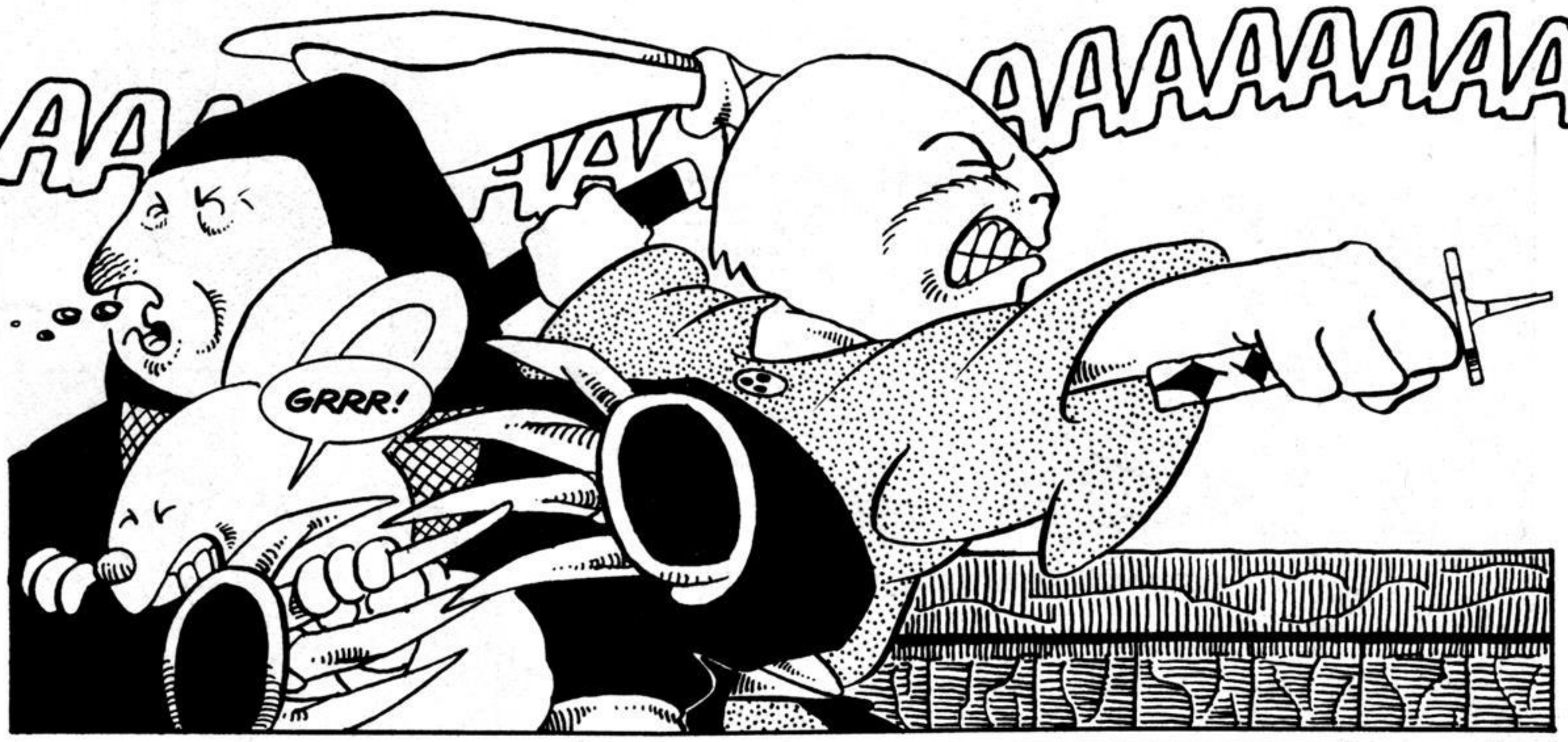
USAGI YOJIMBO T.M.

HOMECOMING! PART II




YEOW!
CHOMP!


RYAAAA


AA
HAA
AAAAAAAAA
GRRR!

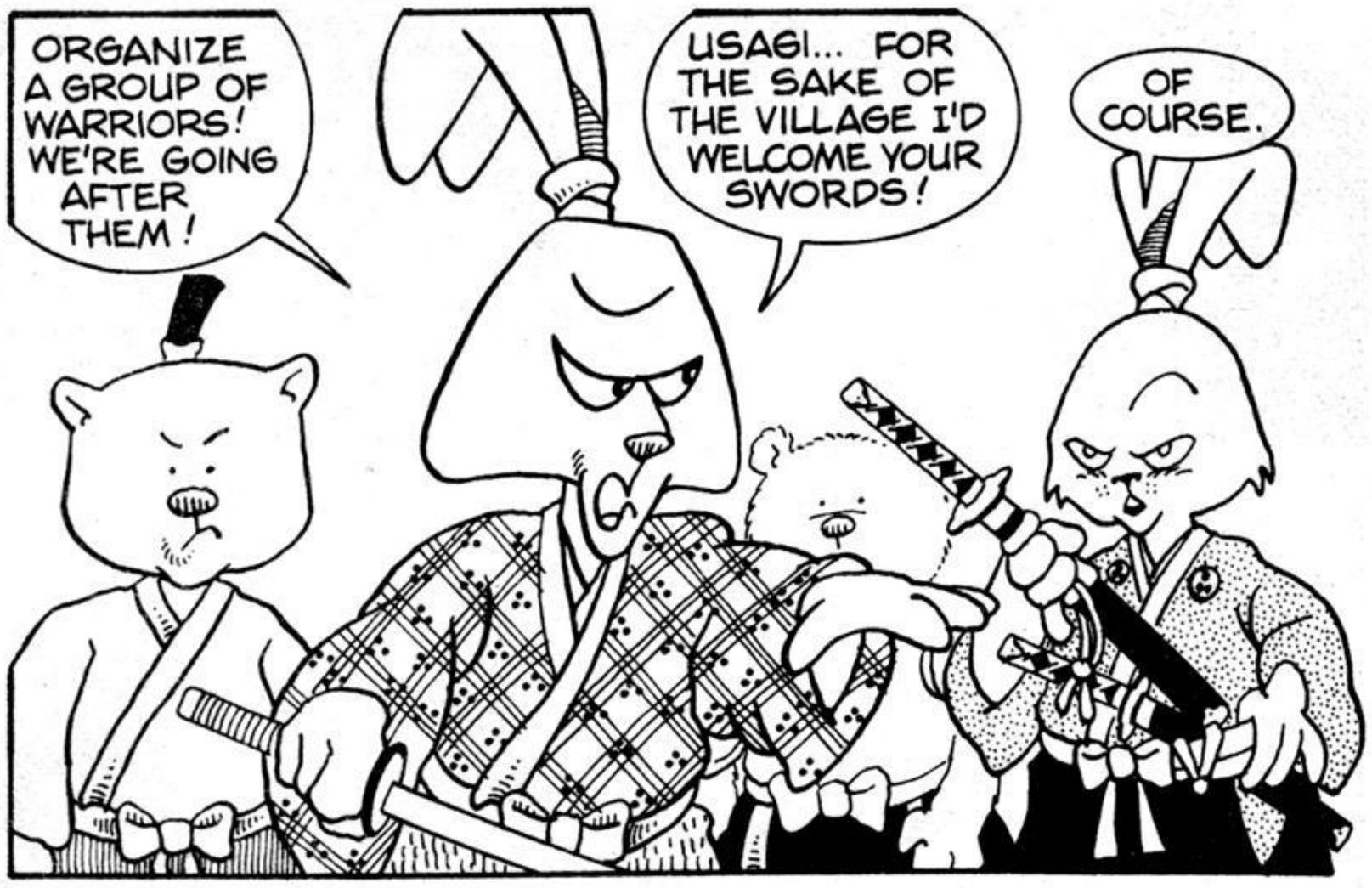
QUICK, SAMURAI, GATHER WARRIORS AND STOP THE MOGURA NINJA OR THE VILLAGE WILL SUFFER!
YES, MAGISTRATE!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, JOTARO?
YES, MOTHER.
YOU'RE A BRAVE CHILD, JOTARO.
THANK YOU, USAGI-SAN.
MAGISTRATE!

IT'S ALREADY TOO LATE! THE NINJA MOLES AMBUSHED THE STOREHOUSE GUARDS FROM BENEATH THE GROUND!
THE VILLAGE SUPPLIES ARE GONE!

WE'VE GOT TO FIND THEM AND RETRIEVE OUR SUPPLIES OR THE VILLAGE DIES THIS WINTER!
BUT HOW? THEY TRAVEL THROUGH TUNNELS WHICH THEY COLLAPSE AFTER THEM-- HOW CAN WE FOLLOW?

THIS IS HOW! THIS NINJA IS COVERED WITH RED CLAY. HE MUST HAVE BURROWED THROUGH IT...

AND THERE'S ONLY ONE SOURCE OF RED CLAY AROUND HERE-- THE EASTERN MOUNTAIN!

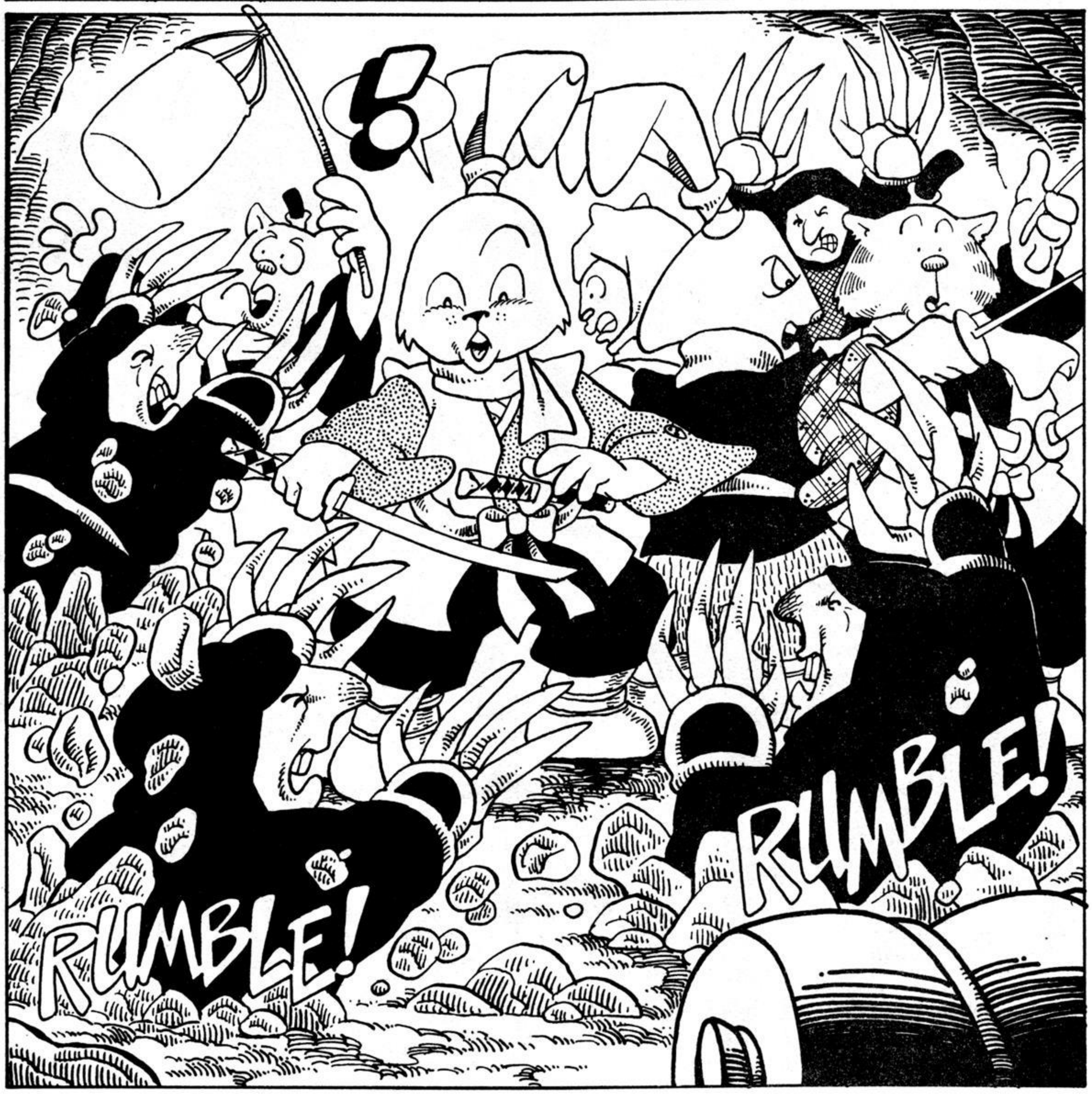

ORGANIZE A GROUP OF WARRIORS! WE'RE GOING AFTER THEM!
USAGI... FOR THE SAKE OF THE VILLAGE I'D WELCOME YOUR SWORDS!
OF COURSE.

LATER...

IT'S BEEN YEARS SINCE I'VE PLAYED IN THESE MOUNTAINS.
I REMEMBER THE TIME WE WERE GATHERING MATSUTAKE' MUSHROOMS...
HA! BET I PICK MORE THAN YOU, KENICHI!
OH YEAH? BET YOU DON'T, USAGI!
LOOK A "TOKAGE". I'LL CATCH IT TO KEEP AS A PET!
NOT IF I CATCH IT FIRST!
EEP?
AHA! I'LL TRAP IT IN THAT CAVE!
EEEP!
HA! GOT YOU!
EEEP!
UH-OH.

WHAAAAAAAAAAA?AAAAAAAAA
YOU TOAD! YOU LURED ME INTO THAT CAVE ON PURPOSE!
FROM NOW ON, WE'RE ENEMIES FOR LIFE!
HA! HA! HA! HA!
THERE WERE MANY INCIDENTS AFTER THAT. NONE OF WHICH WE COULD FORGIVE EACH OTHER FOR.
WELL, USAGI, WHERE ARE THEY? THERE'S NO PLACE AROUND HERE THEY COULD SHELTER IN!
YOU FORGET THAT CAVE NEAR HERE...
...OR ARE YOU AFRAID OF BEING ATTACKED BY LIZARDS?
WE'LL CHECK IT OUT.

LOOK! WE'VE FOUND THE SUPPLIES!
YES, BUT WHERE ARE THE THIEVES?

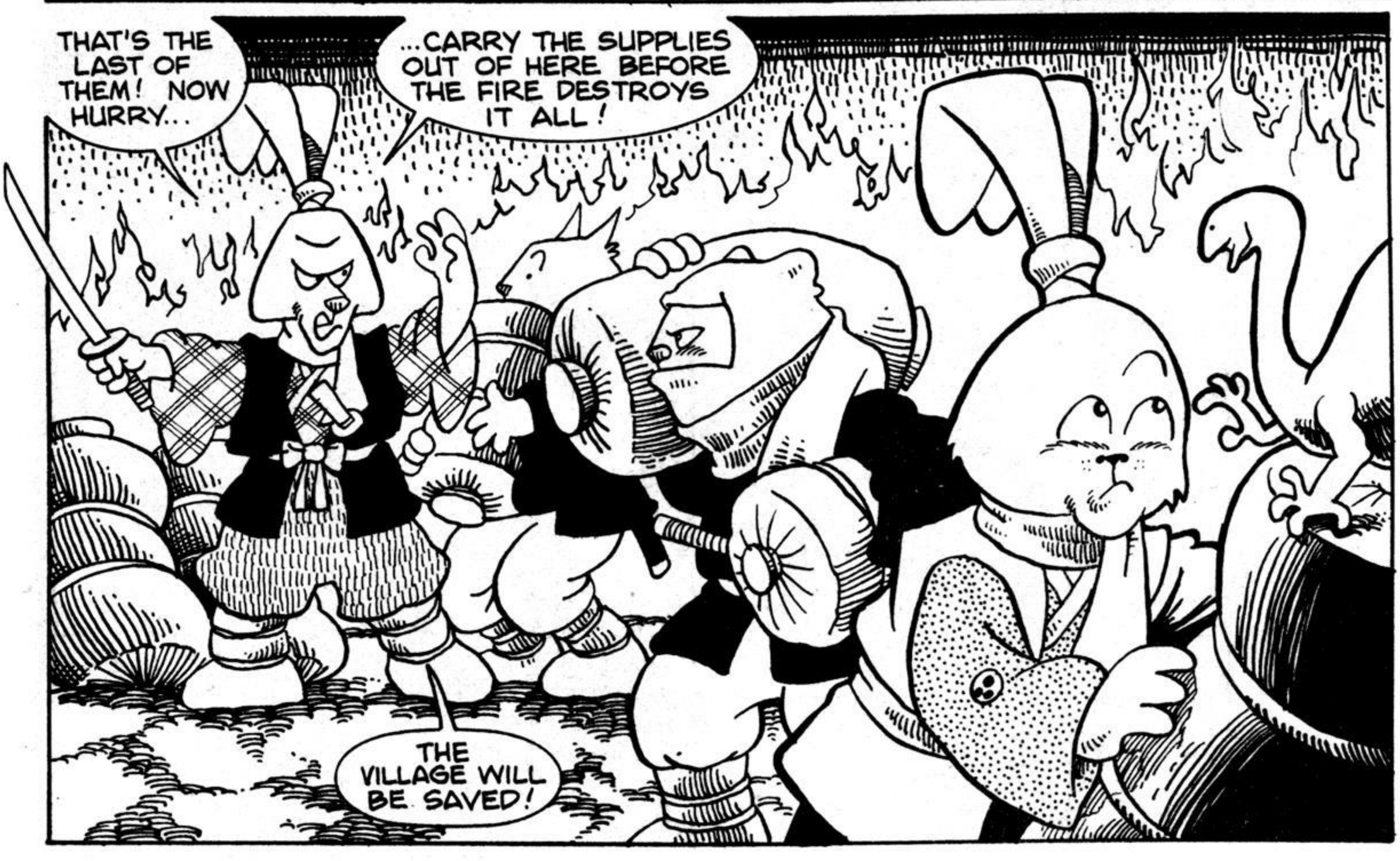

RUMBLE!
RUMBLE!

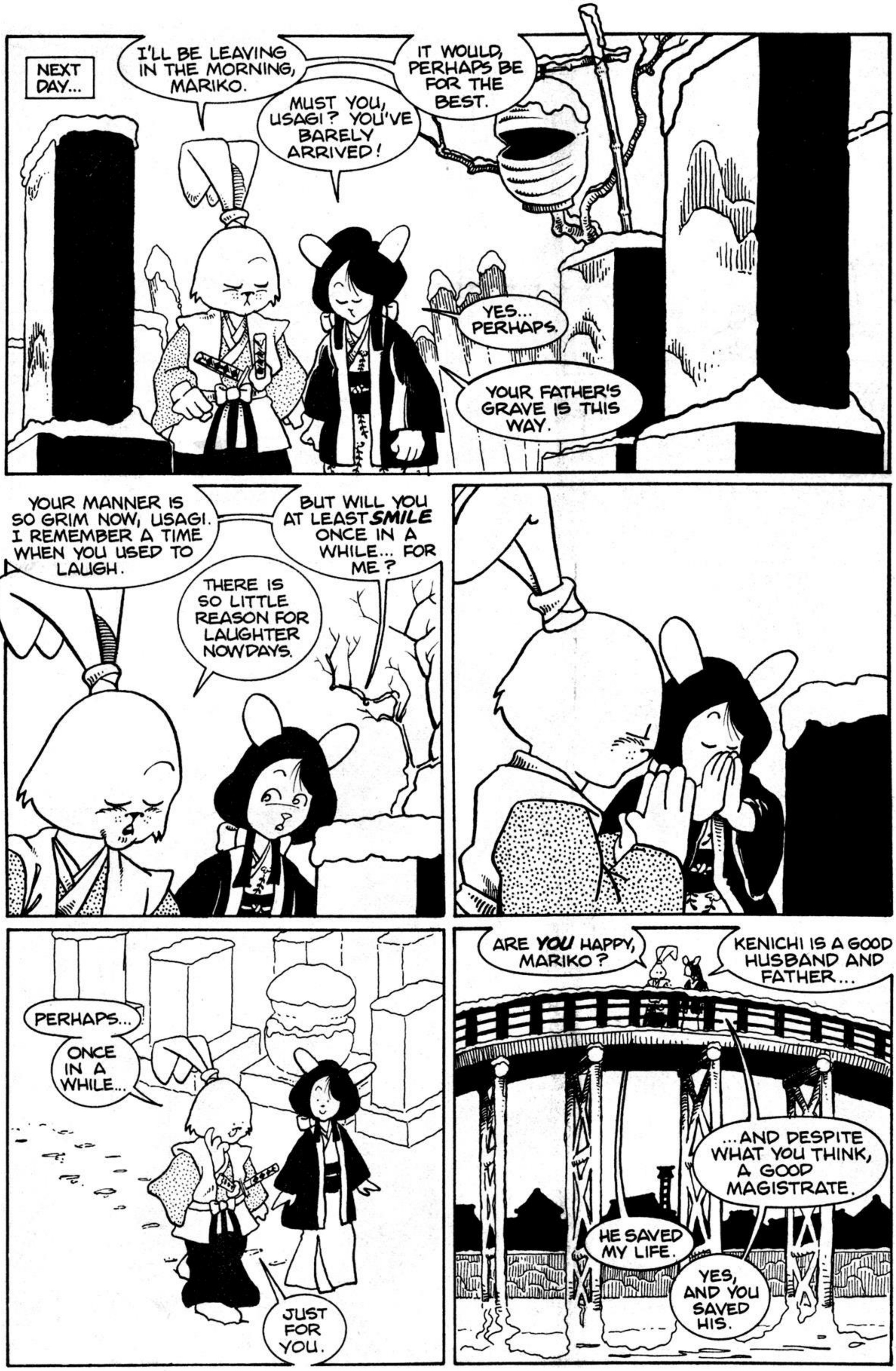
GACK!
ARGH!
OOF!
GURK!
CRACKLE CRACKLE
THE STRAW MATTING ON THE FLOOR'S CAUGHT ON FIRE! WE'RE TRAPPED!
BUT LOOK! THEY'VE BEEN LIVING UNDERGROUND FOR SO LONG, THEY'RE BLINDED BY THE FIRE!
YARG!
ARGH!

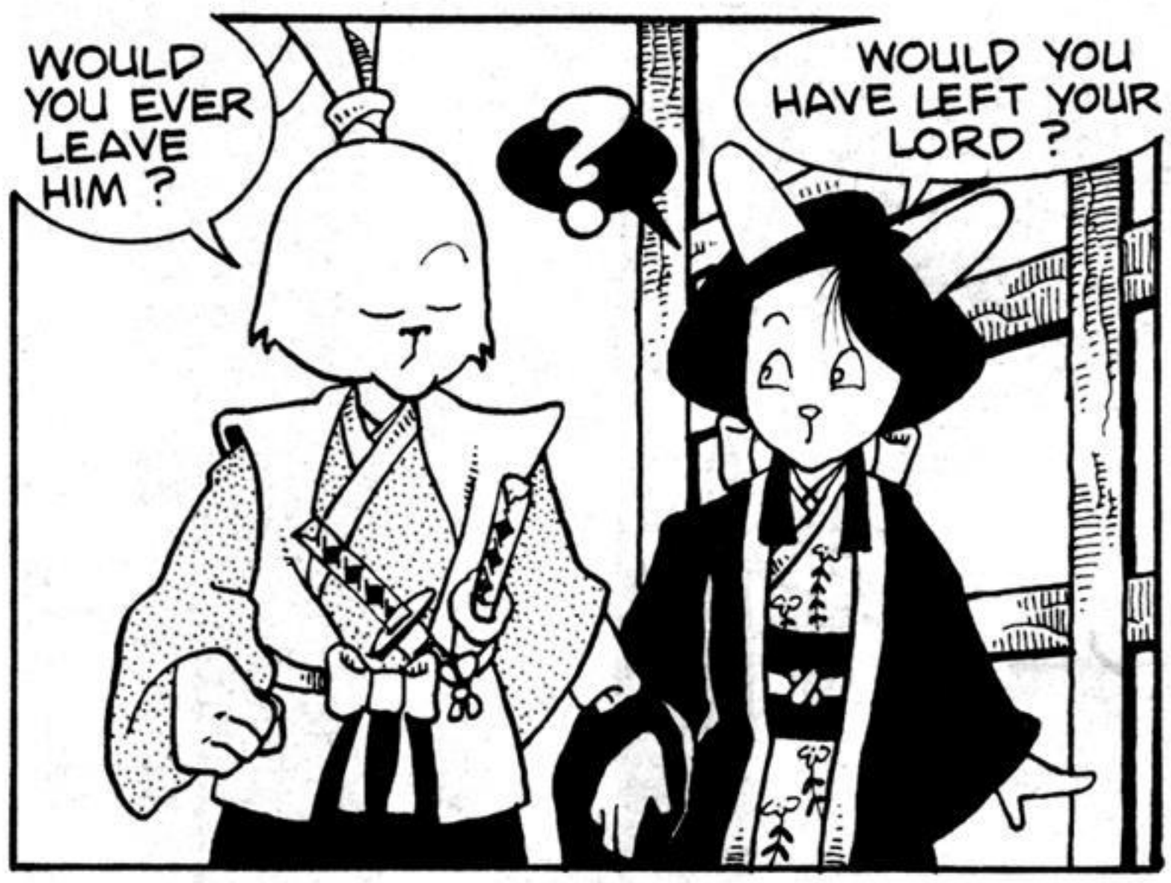
BEWARE! THEY ARE GETTING DESPERATE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO FLEE!

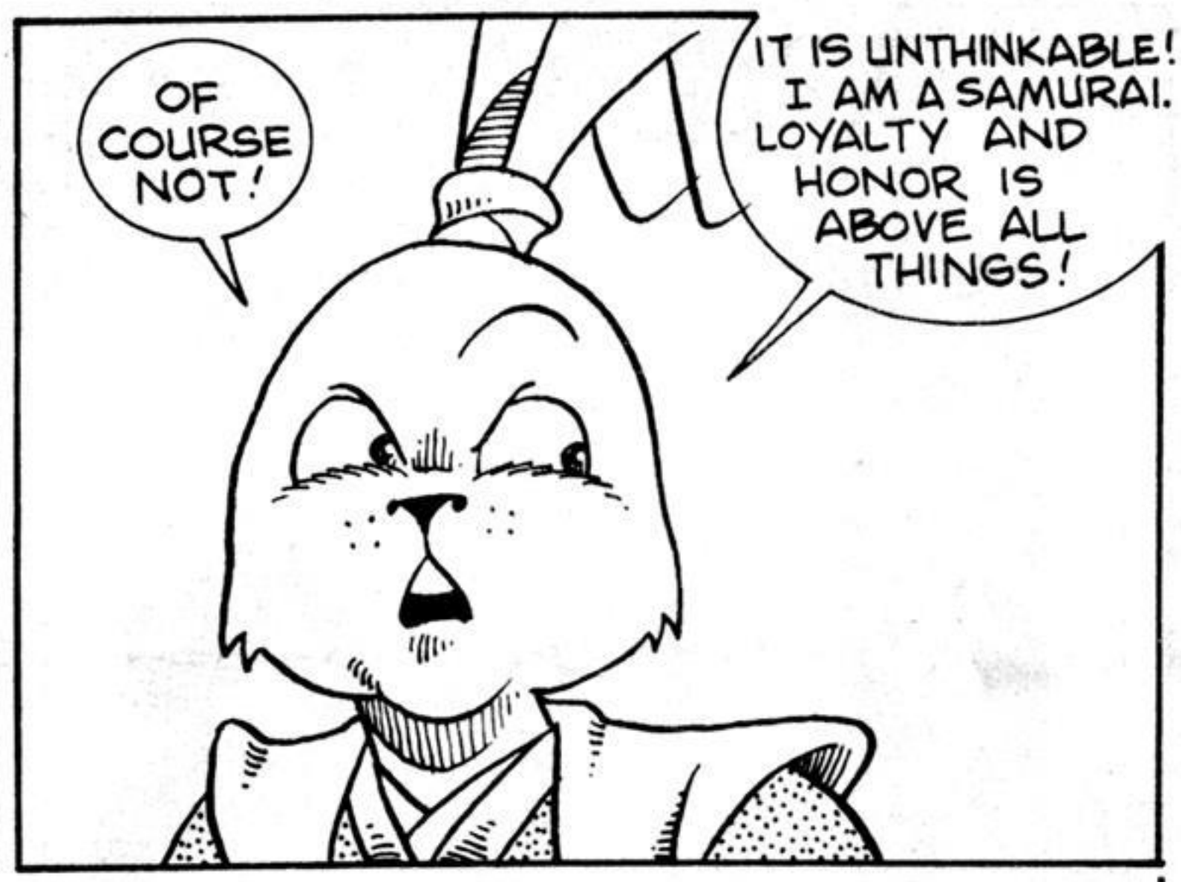
THEN LOOK TO YOUR OWN BACK, USAGI!
GACK!

URK!
AND YOU, TO YOURS, KENICHI!


THAT'S THE LAST OF THEM! NOW HURRY...
...CARRY THE SUPPLIES OUT OF HERE BEFORE THE FIRE DESTROYS IT ALL!
THE VILLAGE WILL BE SAVED!

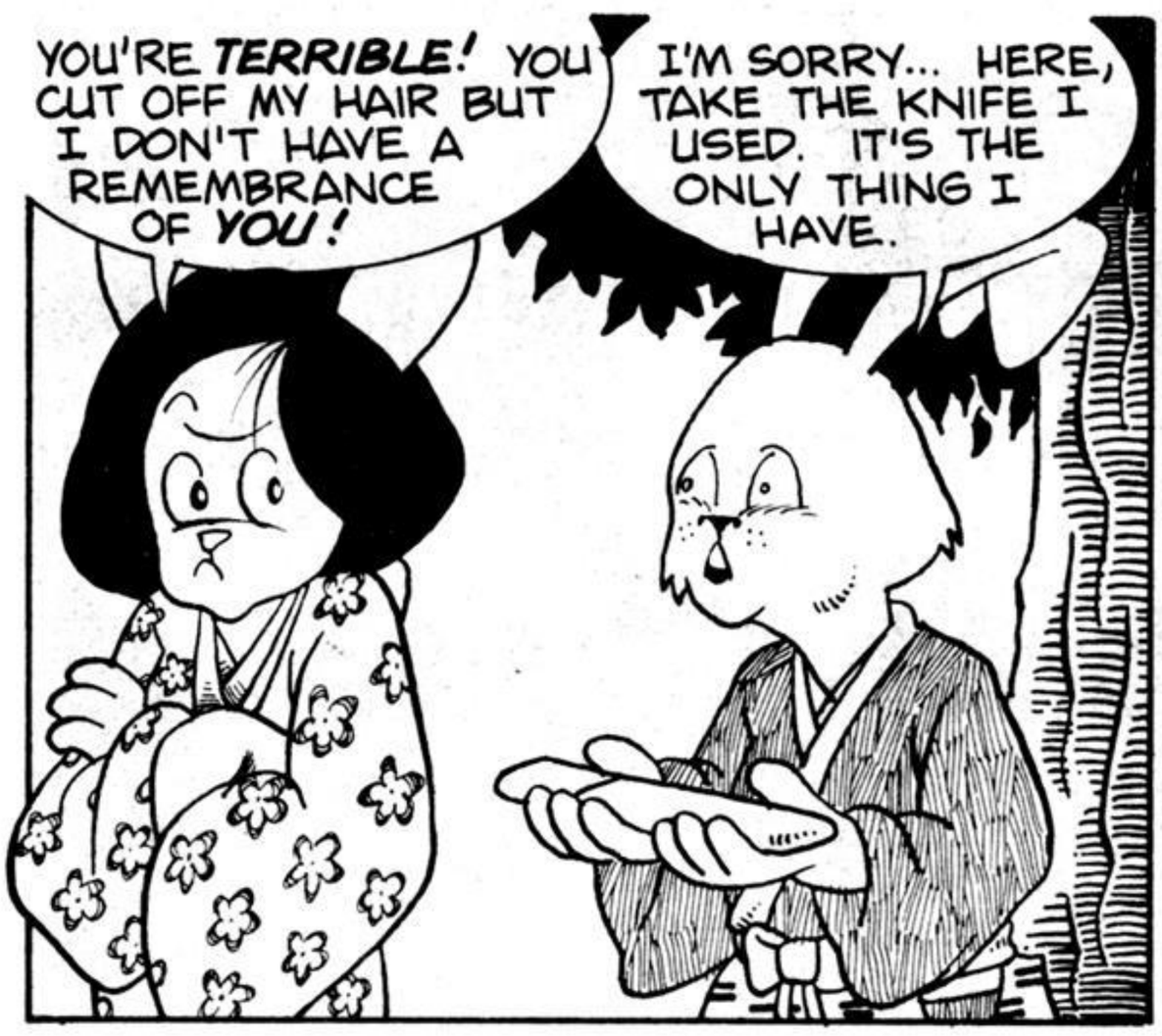

NEXT DAY...
I'LL BE LEAVING IN THE MORNING, MARIKO.
MUST YOU, USAGI? YOU'VE BARELY ARRIVED!
IT WOULD, PERHAPS BE FOR THE BEST.
YES... PERHAPS.
YOUR FATHER'S GRAVE IS THIS WAY.
YOUR MANNER IS SO GRIM NOW, USAGI. I REMEMBER A TIME WHEN YOU USED TO LAUGH.
BUT WILL YOU AT LEAST SMILE ONCE IN A WHILE... FOR ME?
THERE IS SO LITTLE REASON FOR LAUGHTER NOWDAYS.
PERHAPS...
ONCE IN A WHILE...
JUST FOR YOU.
ARE YOU HAPPY, MARIKO?
KENICHI IS A GOOD HUSBAND AND FATHER...
...AND DESPITE WHAT YOU THINK, A GOOD MAGISTRATE.
HE SAVED MY LIFE.
YES, AND YOU SAVED HIS.

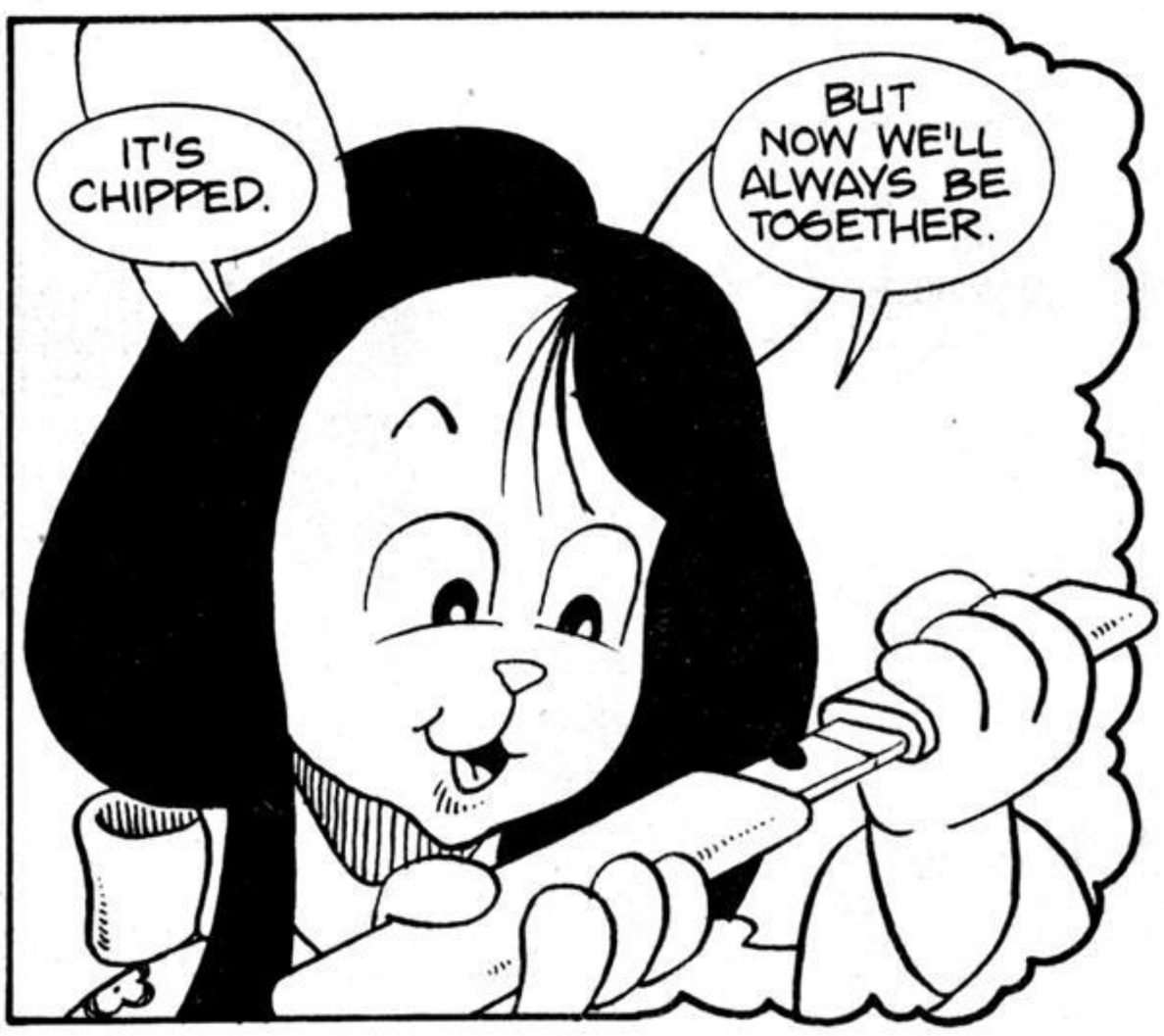

WOULD YOU EVER LEAVE HIM ?
?
WOULD YOU HAVE LEFT YOUR LORD ?


OF COURSE NOT !
IT IS UNTHINKABLE! I AM A SAMURAI. LOYALTY AND HONOR IS ABOVE ALL THINGS!

YOU FORGET, USAGI, I AM SAMURAI, TOO. BUSHIDO, THE WARRIORS' CODE, BINDS ME AS STRONGLY AS IT DOES YOU.
YOU ARE A BETTER SAMURAI THAN I AM.

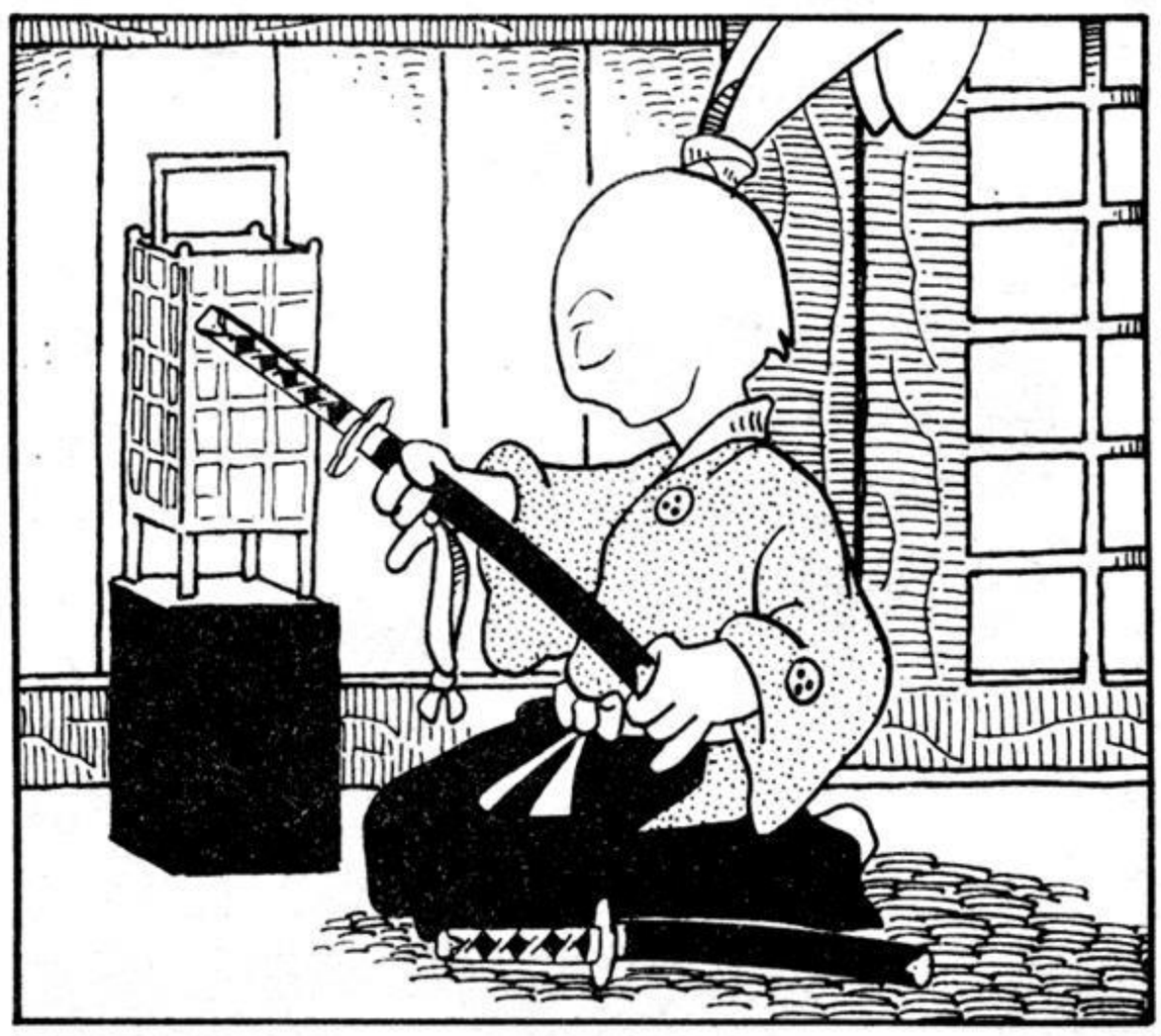
DO YOU REMEMBER THIS TREE ?
OF COURSE! THAT'S WHERE YOU CUT MY HAIR !
USAGI! WHAT ARE YOU DOING BACK THERE ?
ER... CUTTING OFF A LOCK OF YOUR HAIR SO I'LL HAVE A MOMENTO OF YOU TO KEEP WITH ME ALWAYS!

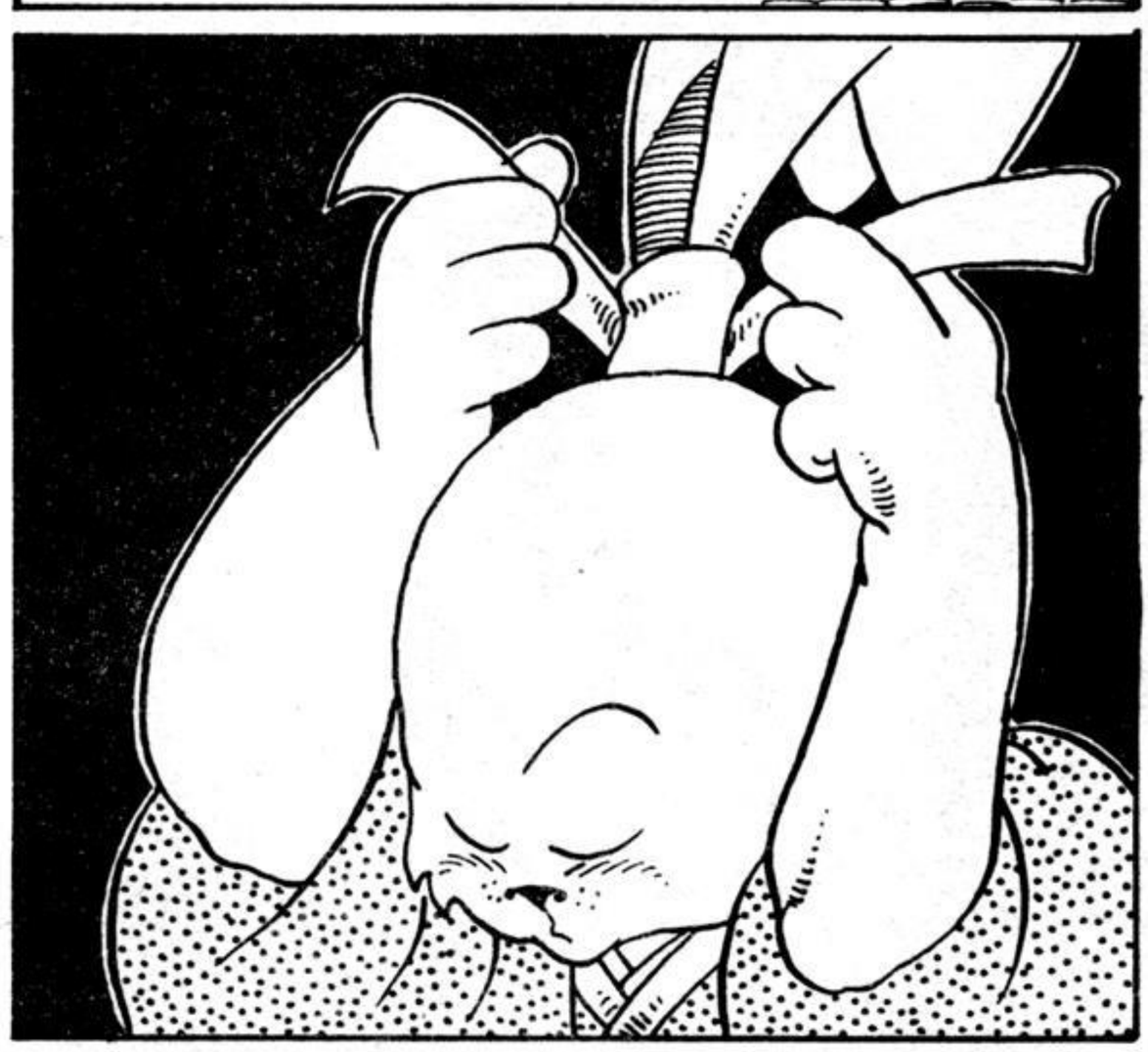

YOU'RE TERRIBLE! YOU CUT OFF MY HAIR BUT I DON'T HAVE A REMEMBRANCE OF YOU!
I'M SORRY... HERE, TAKE THE KNIFE I USED. IT'S THE ONLY THING I HAVE.

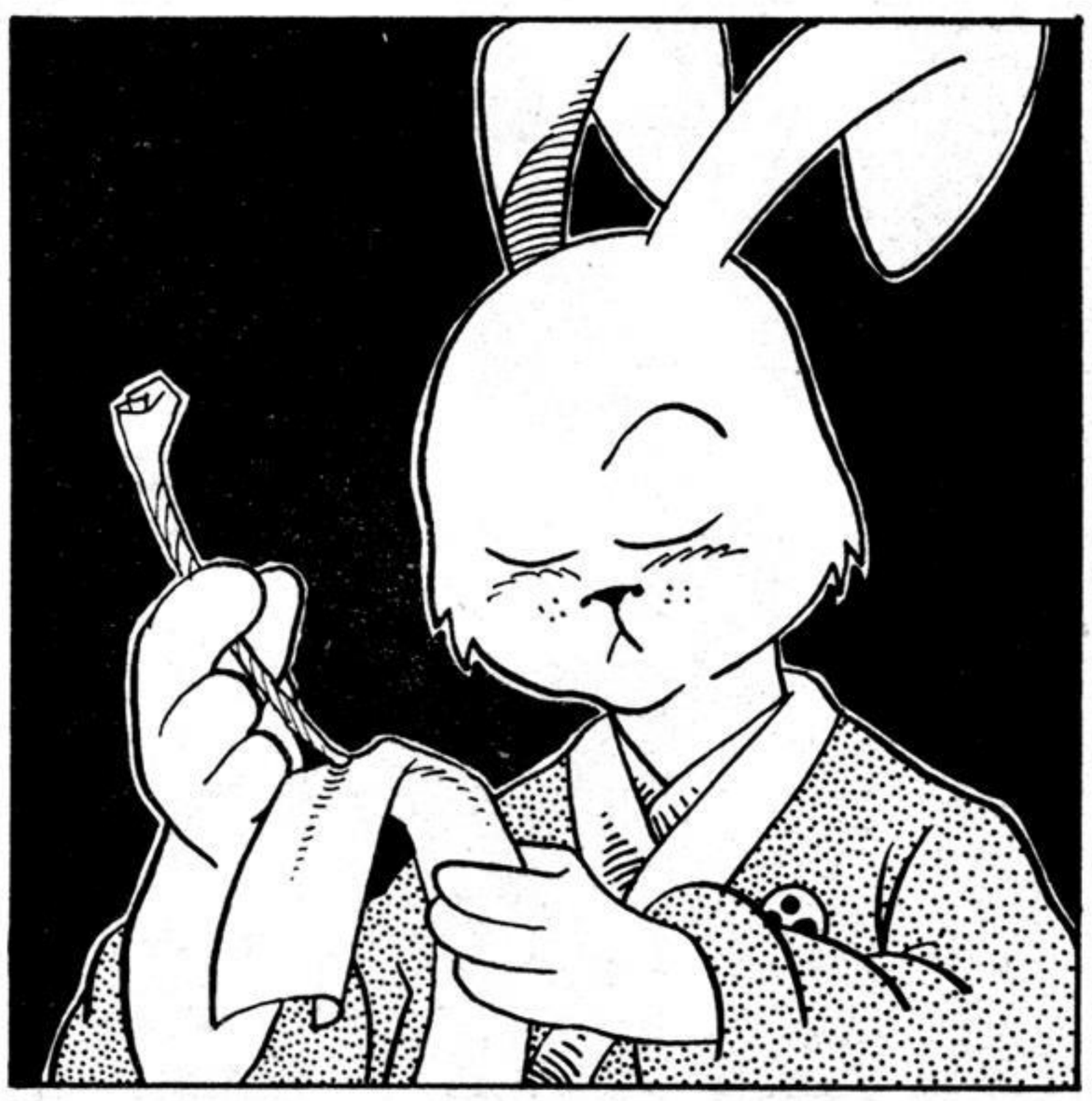

IT'S CHIPPED.
BUT NOW WE'LL ALWAYS BE TOGETHER.

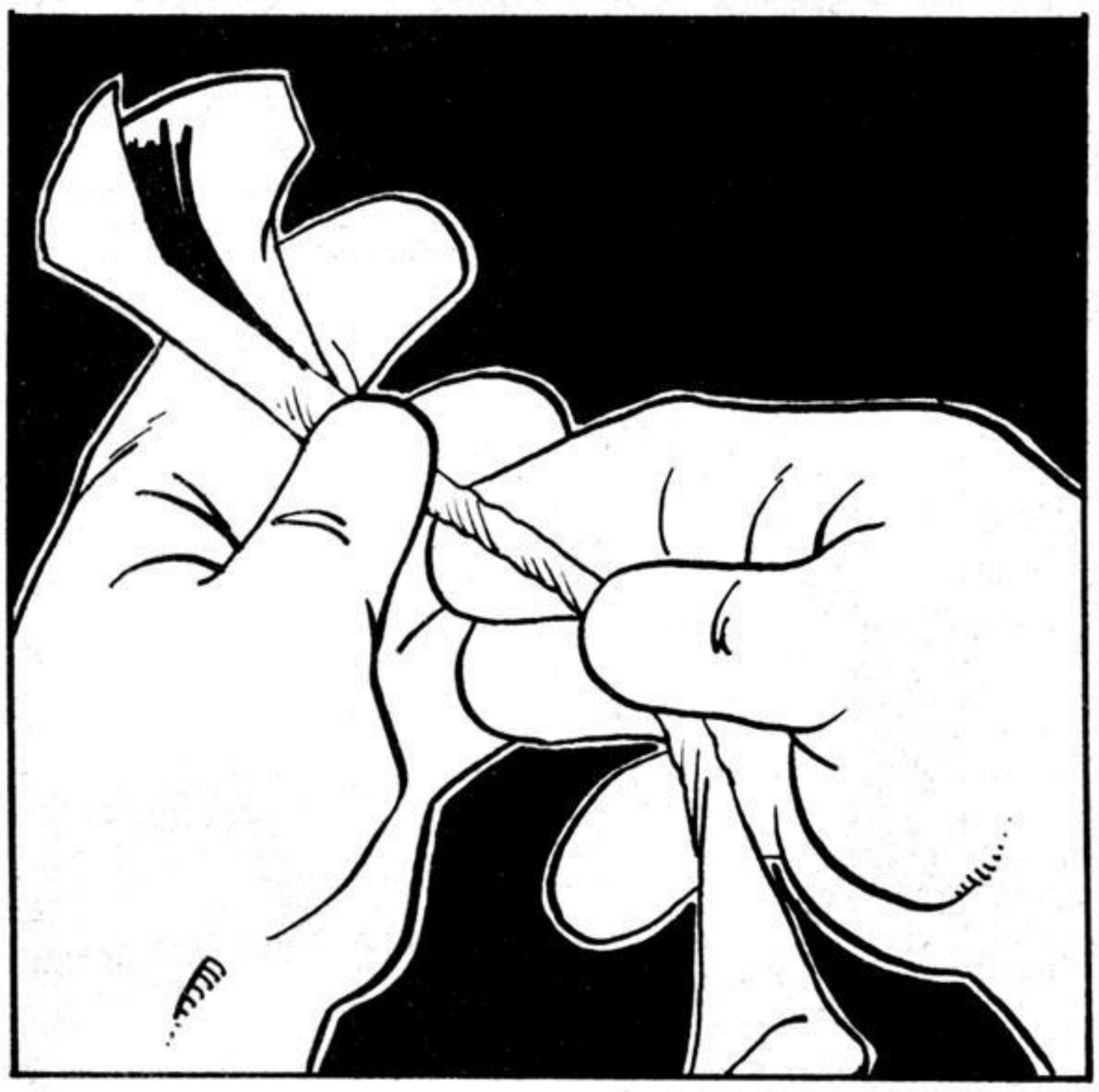
WHAT SILLY CHILDREN WE WERE.
HA! HA! YES.

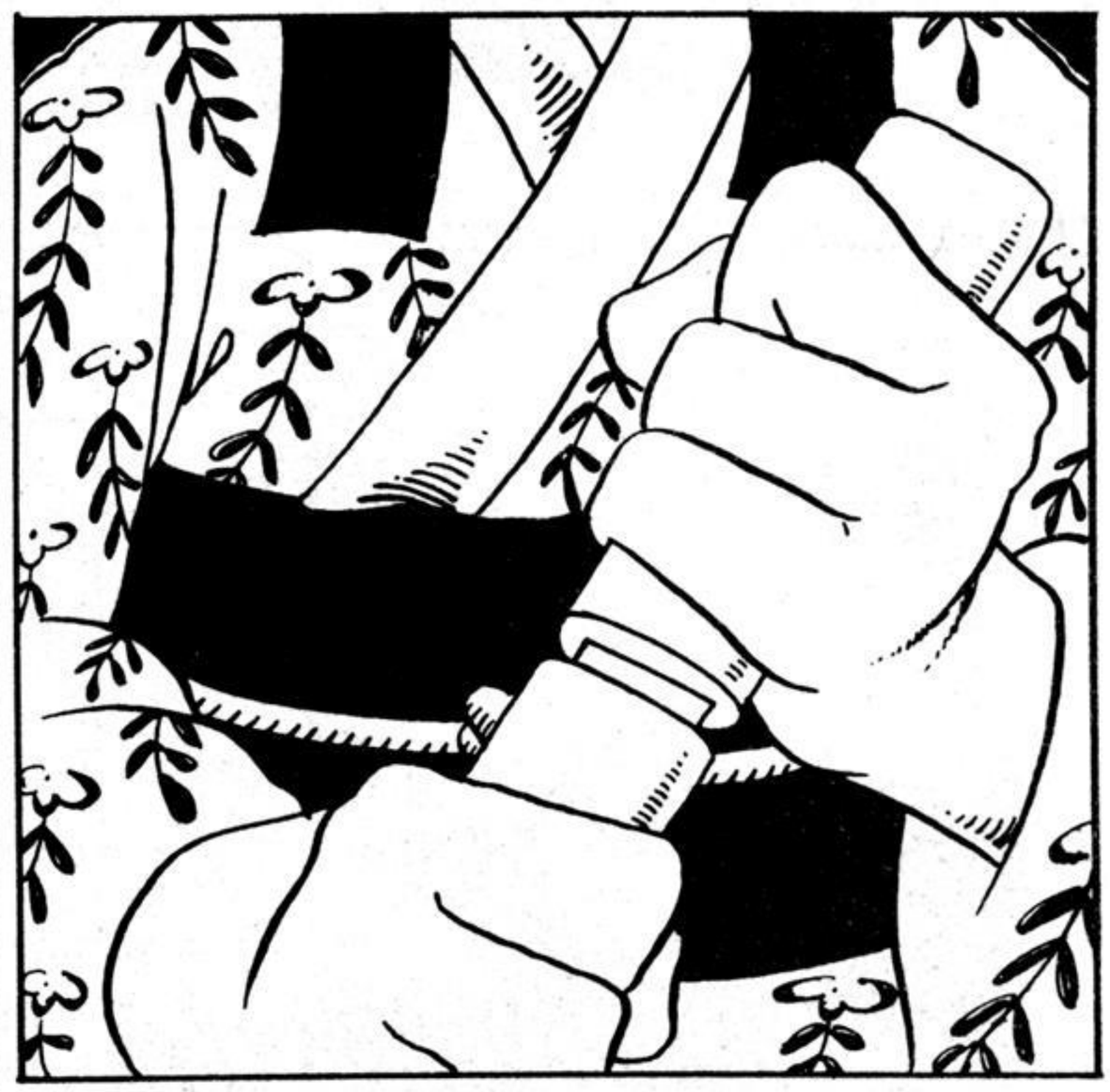
WELL, THIS IS MY ROOM.
GOOD-NIGHT, USAGI.
...AND GOOD-BYE.
SLEEP WELL, MARIKO.

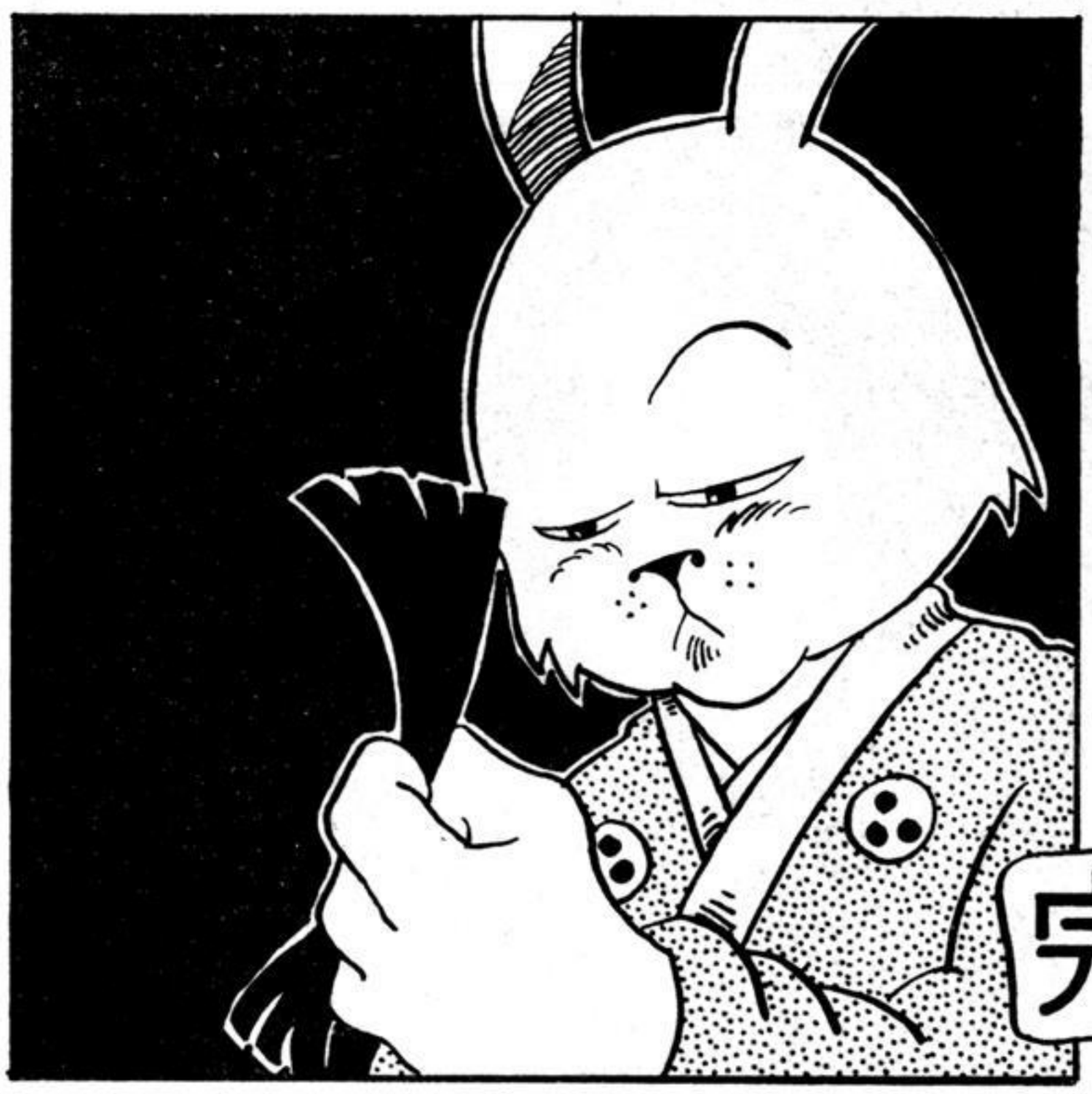












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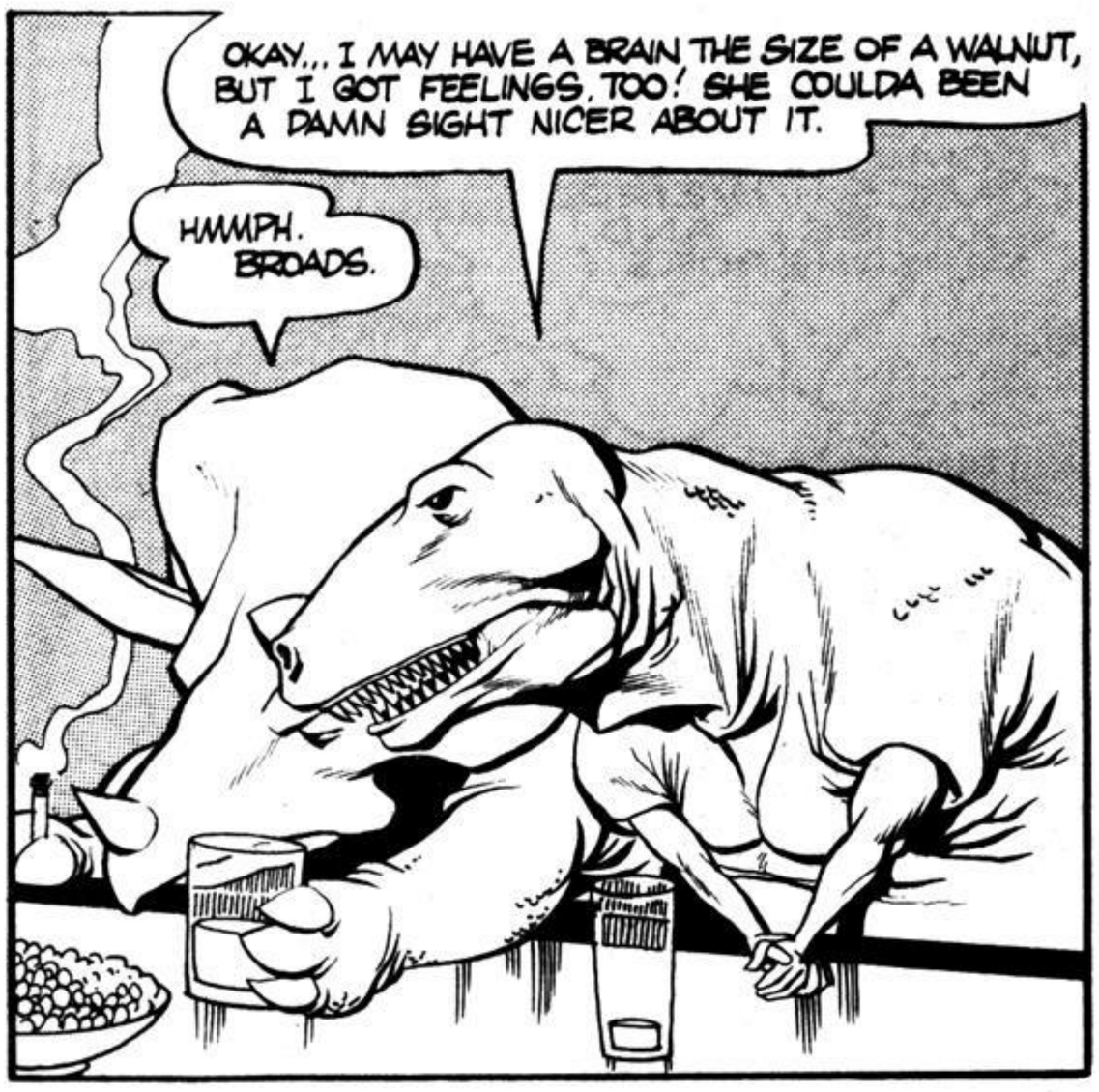
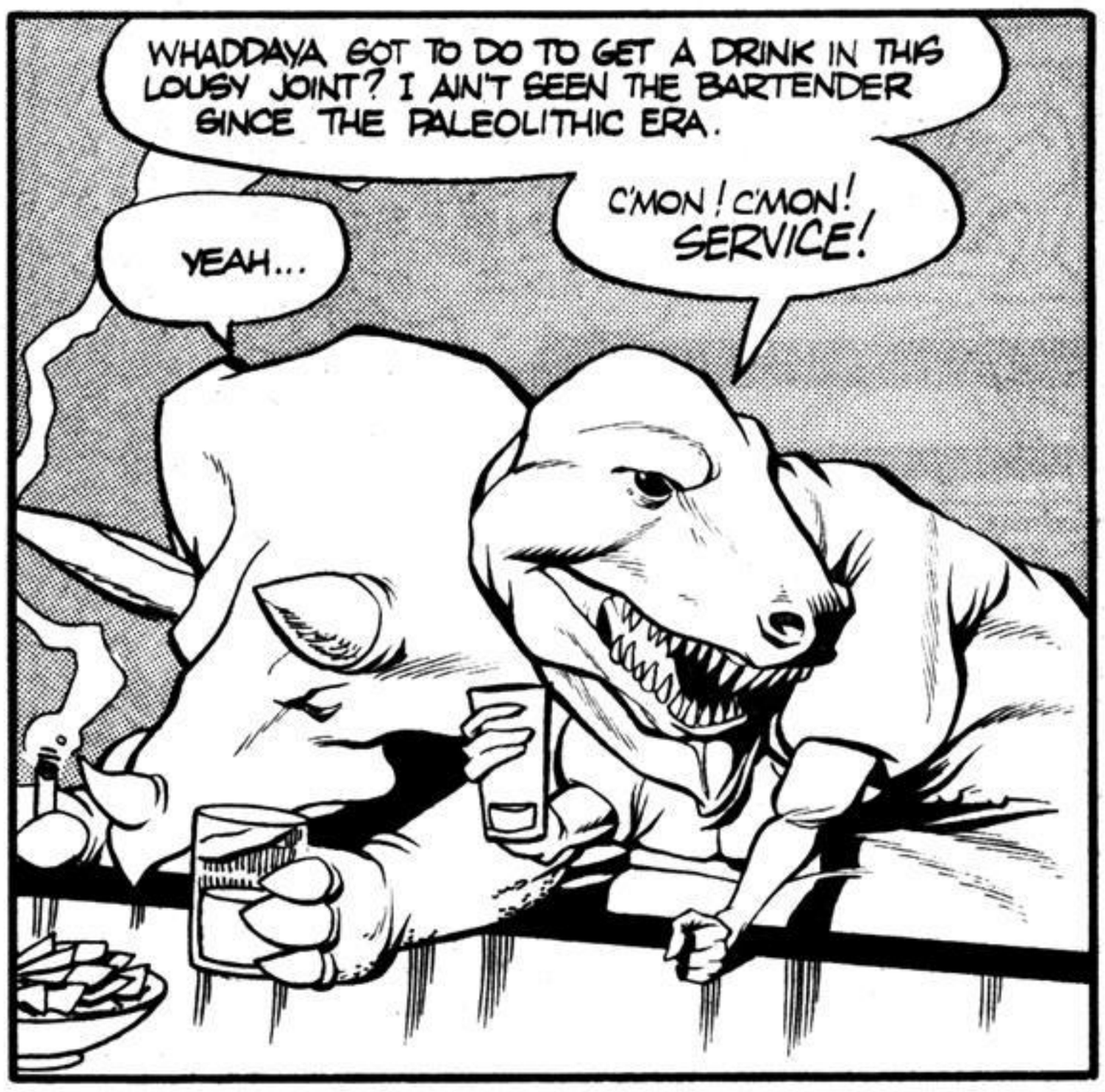
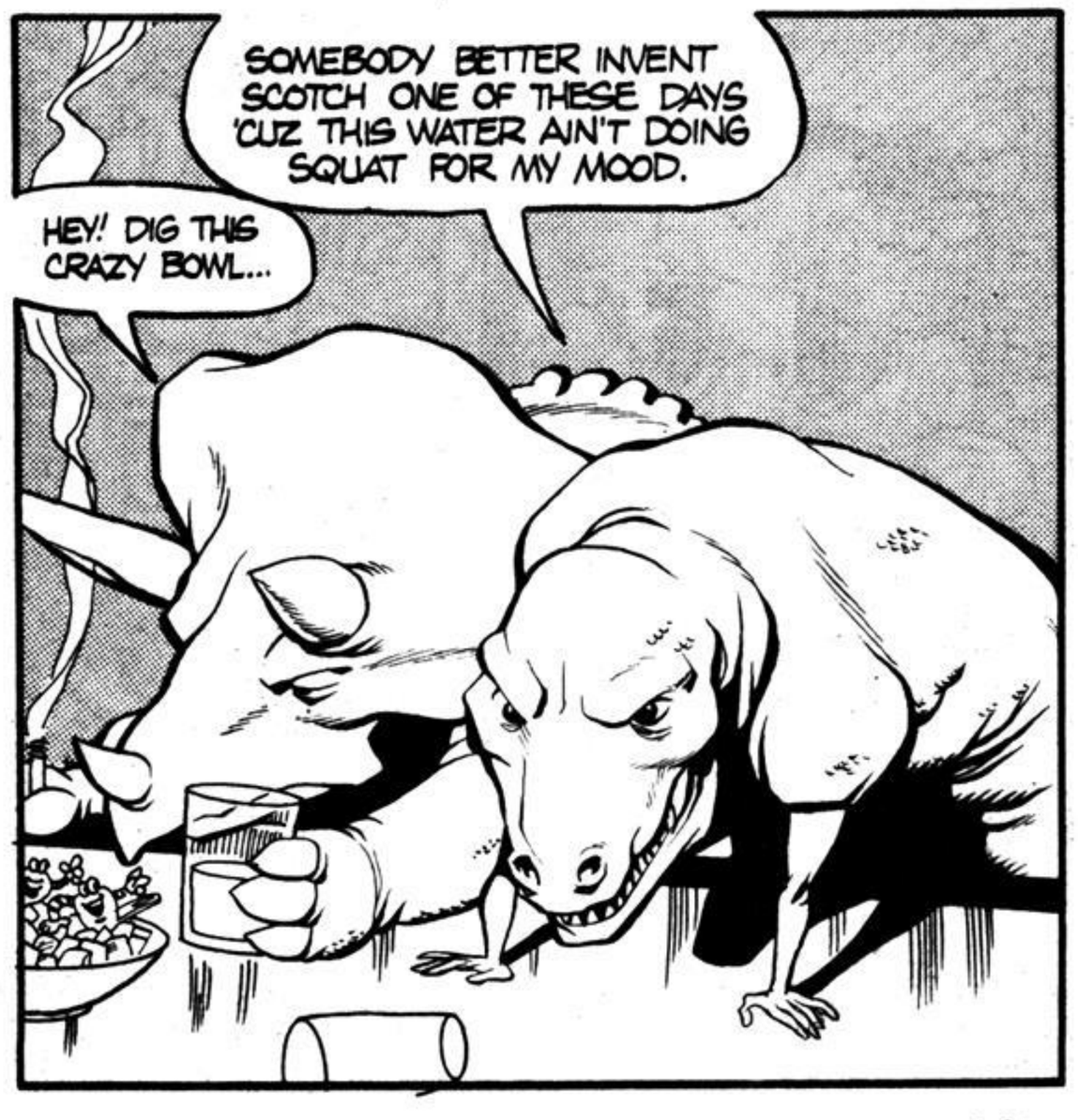
DINOSAURS AT THE BAR

© 1986
Ty Templeton

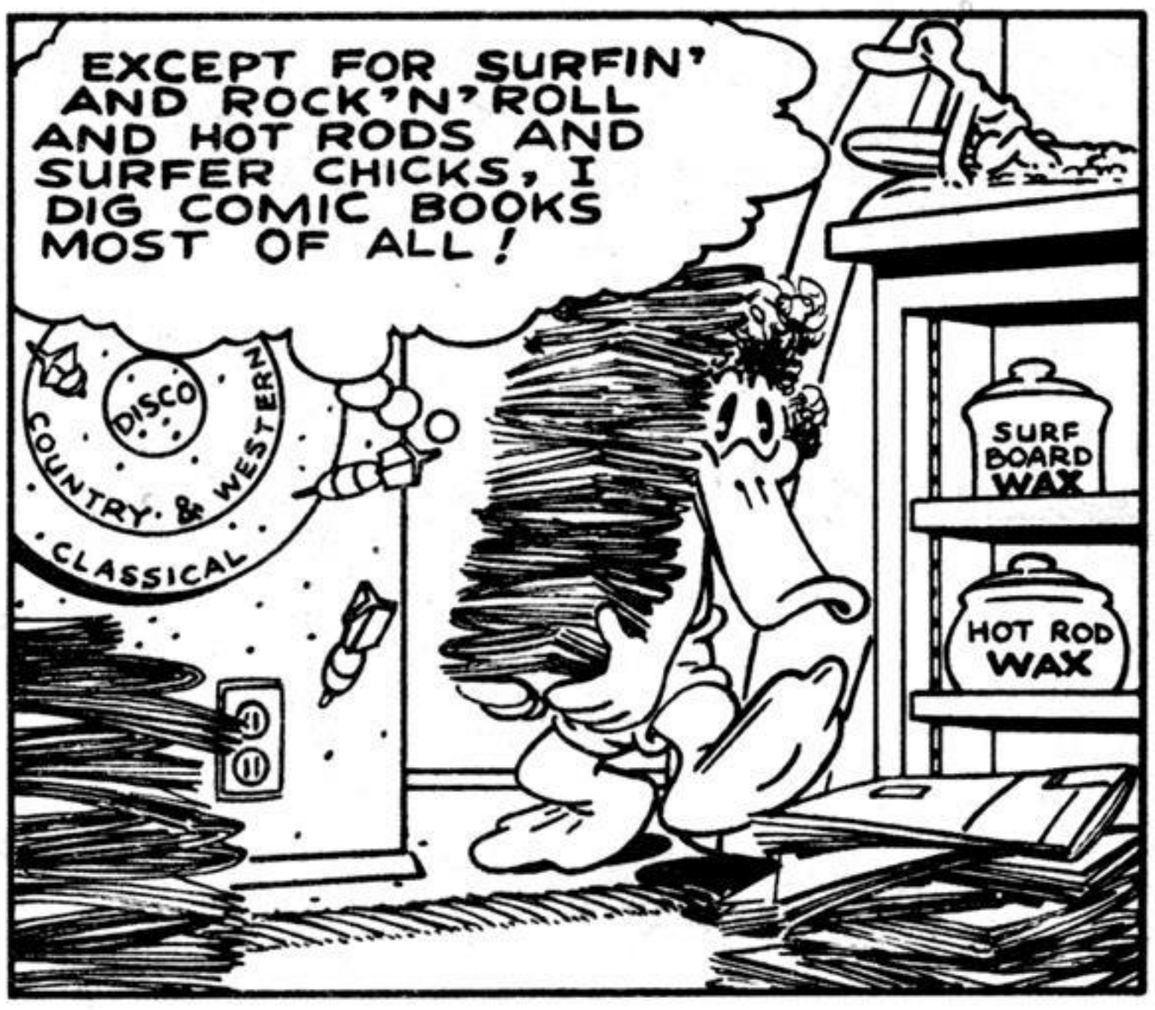


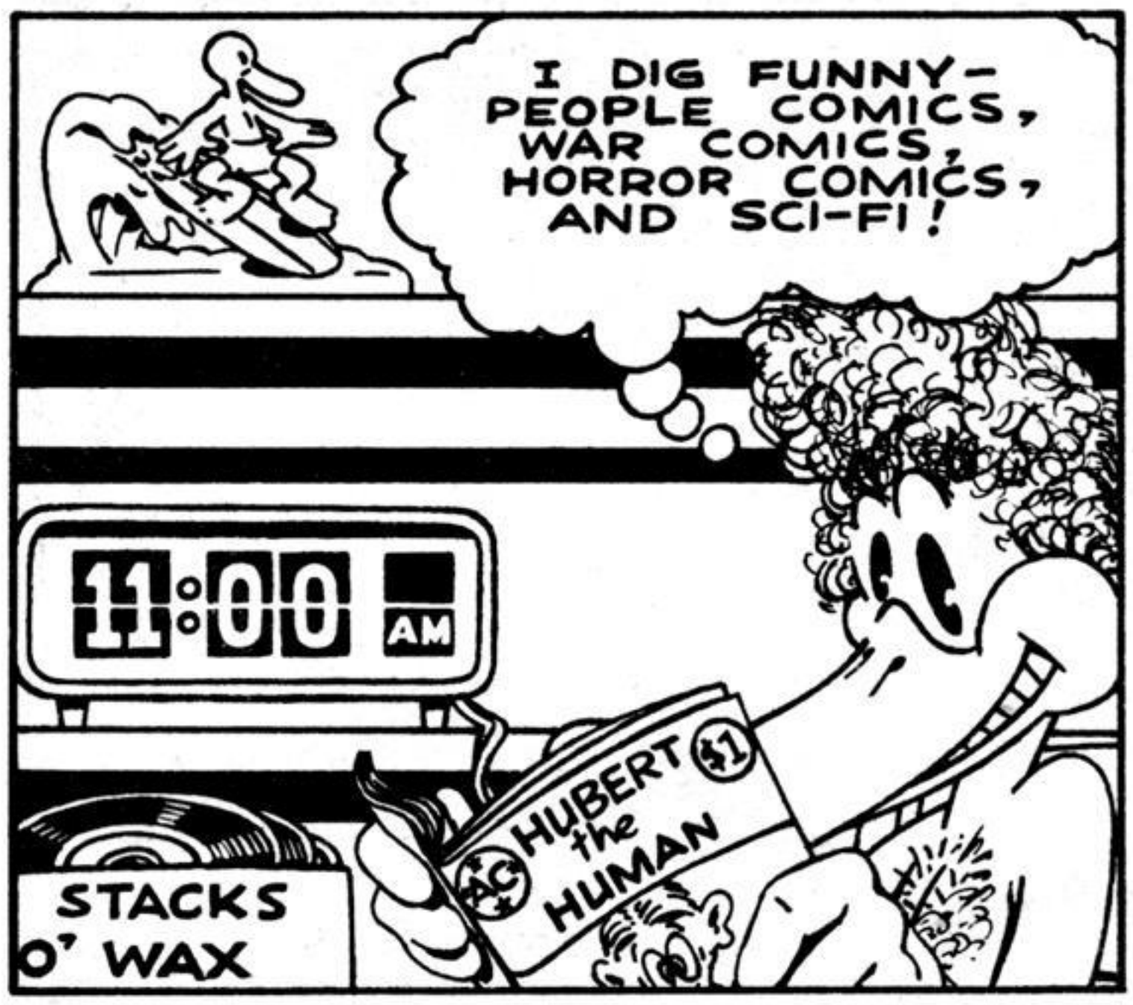


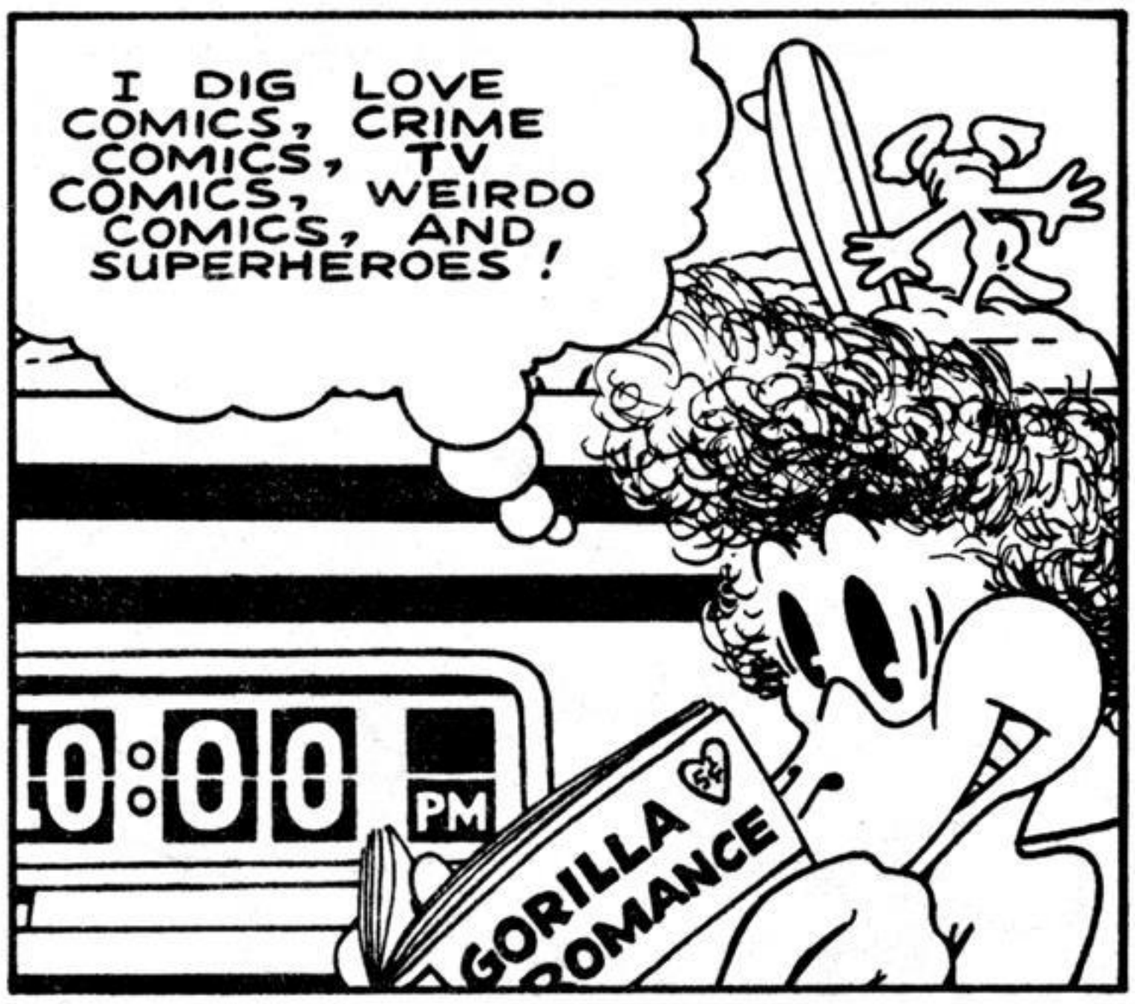


NEXT: THE ICE AGE VS. THE HAPPY HOUR. 'NUFF SAID.

CHUCK DUCK
A CHARACTER CREATED BY DENNIS BUDD
"HANG SIX"
CHUCK that DUCK
in —
"SUPER SANTA"
ALL-NEW STORY AND ART BY THAT ENIGMATIC...
MR. Mystery ARTIST


EXCEPT FOR SURFIN' AND ROCK'N'ROLL AND HOT RODS AND SURFER CHICKS, I DIG COMIC BOOKS MOST OF ALL!
DISCO
COUNTRY & WESTERN
CLASSICAL
SURF BOARD WAX
HOT ROD WAX


I DIG FUNNY-PEOPLE COMICS, WAR COMICS, HORROR COMICS, AND SCI-FI!
11:00 AM
STACKS O' WAX
HUBERT the HUMAN
$1


I DIG LOVE COMICS, CRIME COMICS, TV COMICS, WEIRDO COMICS, AND SUPERHEROES!
10:00 PM
GORILLA ROMANCE

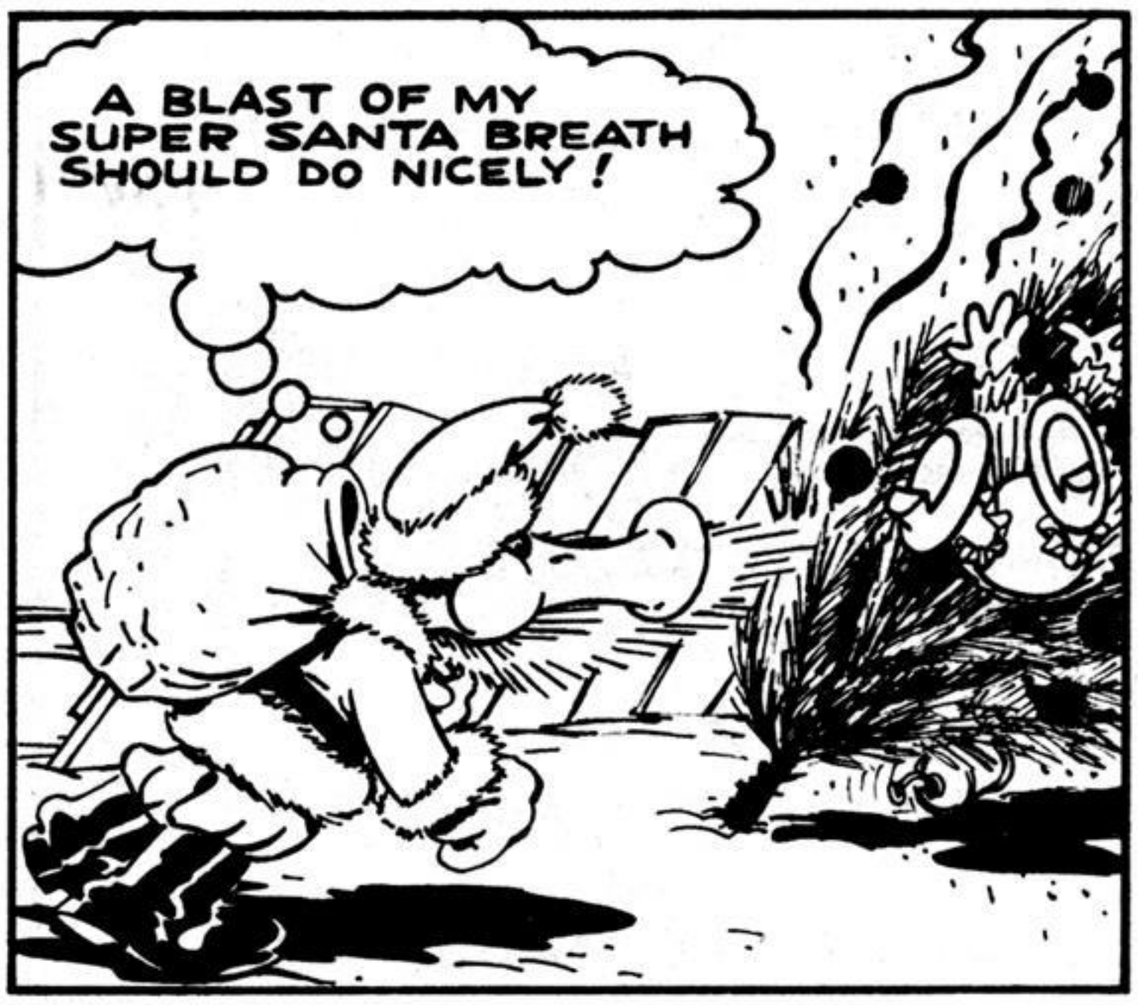
BUT ESPECIALLY, I DIG HOLIDAY COMICS!
GOLD KEYHOLE COMICS
SANTA FAMILY
50¢
HO-HO

I COULD READ HOLIDAY COMICS FOR HOURS, FOR DAYS, FOR YEARS, FOREVER...
YAWN!
3:00 AM
SUPER SANTA
BIFF BANG

UH OH! LOOKS LIKE WE'RE HEADED FOR A DREAM SEQUENCE!

GREAT BALLS OF POPCORN! THAT CHRISTMAS TREE IS ON FIRE!
HELP! HELP! HELP! HELP! HEEEE-ELP!
THIS IS A JOB FOR...

...SUPER SANTA!
SUPER SANTA
A CHARACTER CREATED BY MARK ALLAN ARMSTRONG

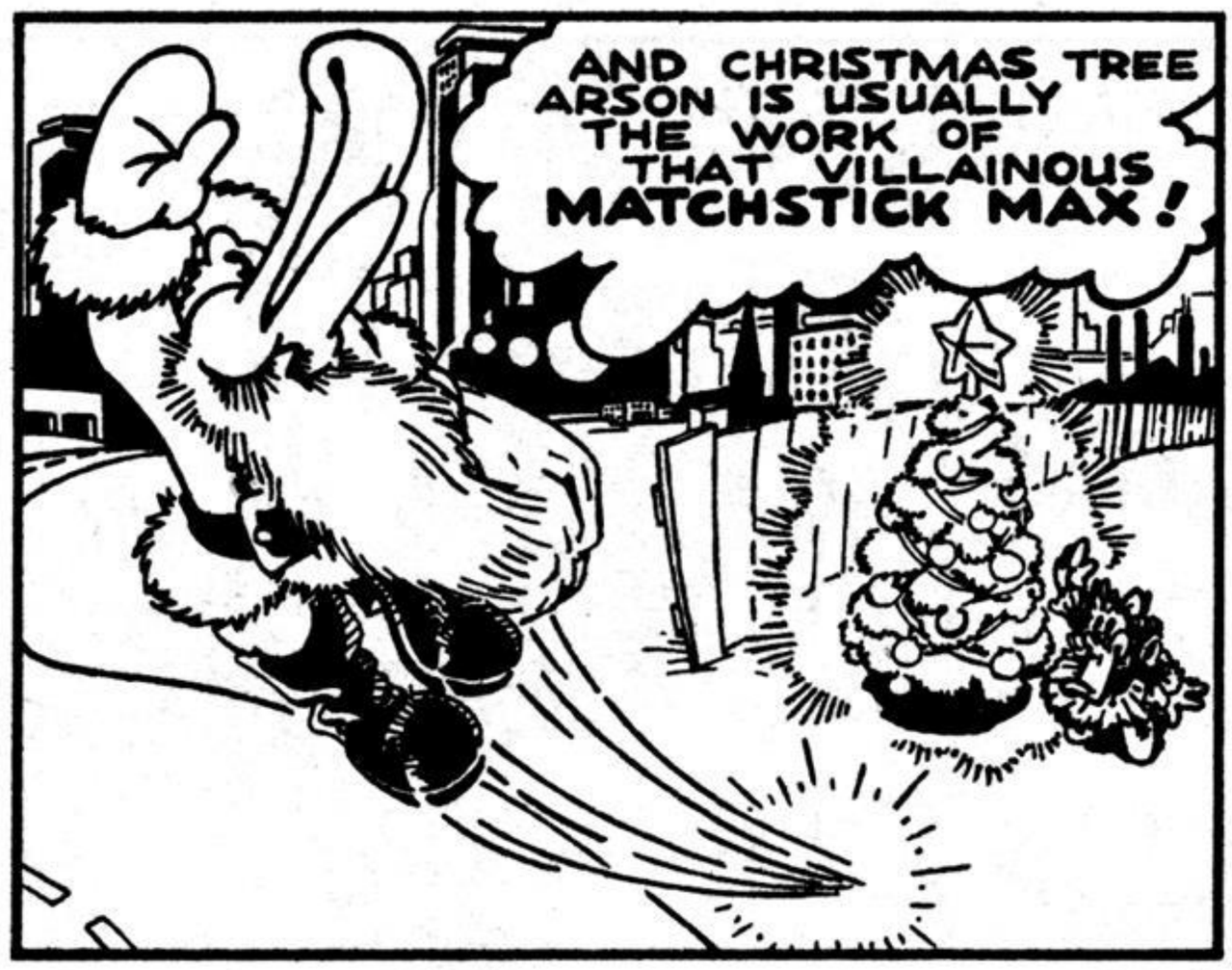

A BLAST OF MY SUPER SANTA BREATH SHOULD DO NICELY!

THANKS FOR PUTTING OUT THE FIRE, SUPER SANTA! A BLACK CHRISTMAS TREE IS BETTER THAN NONE, I SUPPOSE... SNIFF, SNIFF, SOB, SNIFF...
DRY YOUR TEARS, LITTLE GIRL!

I KEEP...
JUST THE THING...
FOR...
EMERGENCIES LIKE THIS...
IN MY UTILITY BAG!

THERE! I PAINTED EVERY NEEDLE AND RIBBON AND ORNAMENT WITH GOLD PAINT!
GOLLY GEE! A GOLDEN CHRISTMAS TREE! OH, THANK YOU, SUPER SANTA! THANK YOU!

THIS DISCARDED CAN OF CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTER FLUID INDICATES ARSON—


AND CHRISTMAS TREE ARSON IS USUALLY THE WORK OF THAT VILLAINOUS MATCHSTICK MAX!

HE DIDN'T GET FAR! I SEE HIM WITH MY SUPER SANTA VISION!

HERE I COME TO SAVE CHRISTMAS DAY!
CURSES! THAT'S SUPER SANTA HEADED MY WAY!

WHAT A LAUGH! HE'S HEADED UP A BLIND ALLEY!
AVENUE ENDS

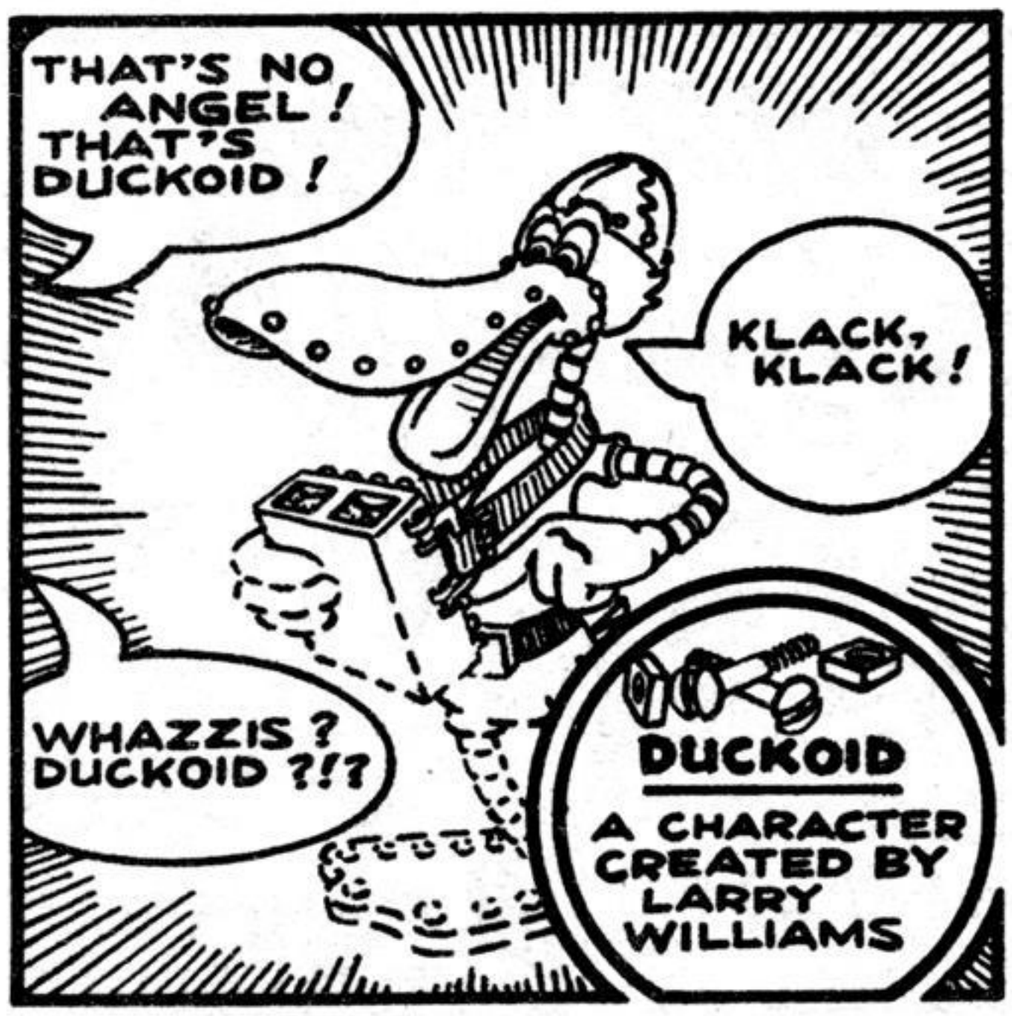
WELL MAX, IT LOOKS LIKE YOU TRAPPED YOURSELF, THIS TIME!
HAR DEE HAR HAR! WHAT A SUCKER!
SLAP!

THIS IS THE SECOND TIME THIS MONTH I'VE LURED YOU INTO A BLIND ALLEY WITH A HIDDEN CACHE OF YOUR ONLY WEAKNESS!
GREEN EGGNOG!

YEH! GREEN EGGNOG! IT MAKES YOU SICK JUST TO BE NEAR THE STUFF...
OOK! ICK!

AND IF YOU DRINK IT, HEE HEE HEE, YOU DIE!
GASP! GROAN! MOAN! WHEEZE!

COME ON, DRINK IT UP LIKE A GOOD LITTLE SOLDIER!
I MUST BE CROSSING THE THRESHOLD OF DEATH! I CAN EVEN SEE AN ANGEL MATERIALIZING TO ESCORT ME...

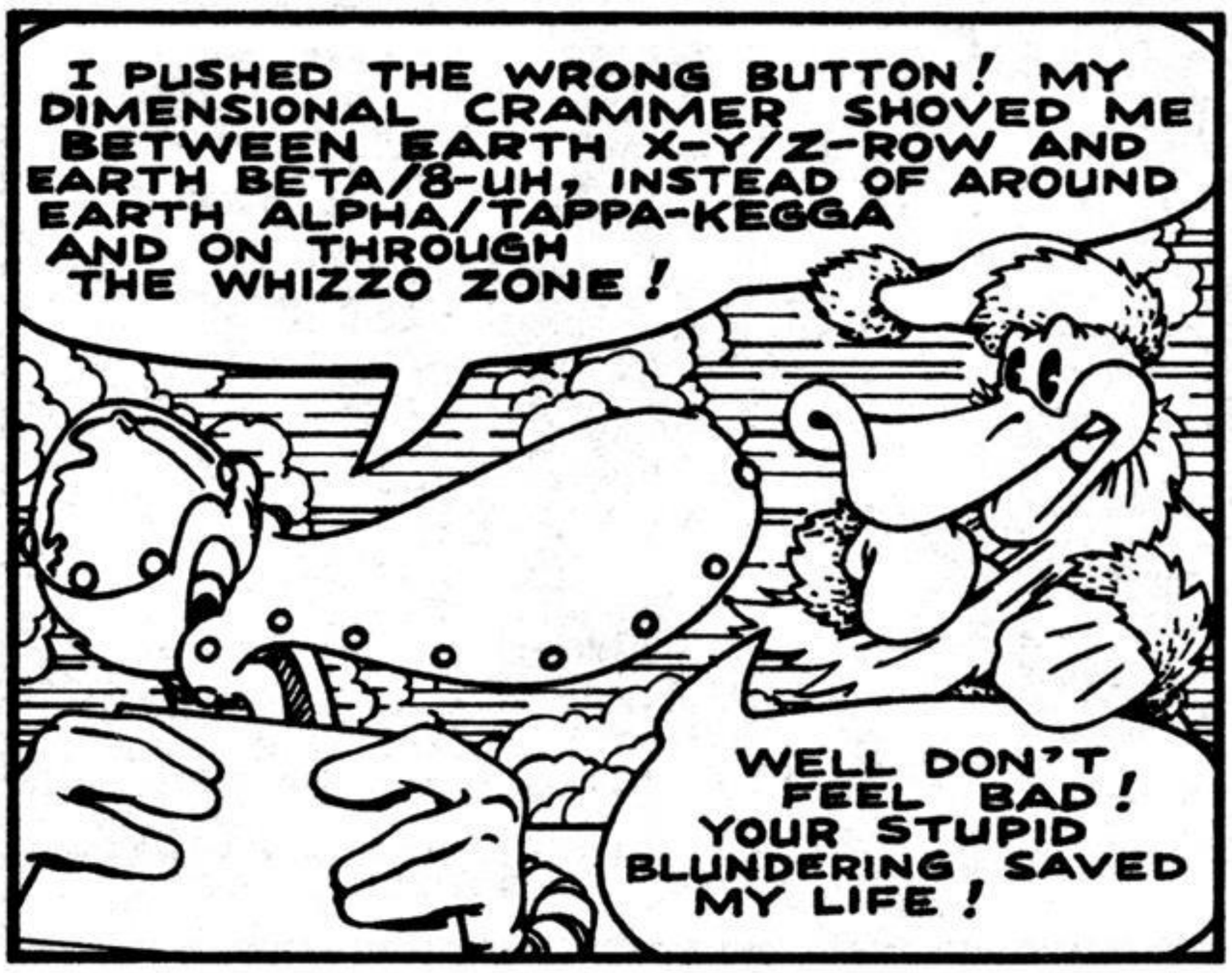

THAT'S NO ANGEL! THAT'S DUCKOID!
KLACK, KLACK!
WHAZZIS? DUCKOID ?!?
DUCKOID
A CHARACTER CREATED BY LARRY WILLIAMS

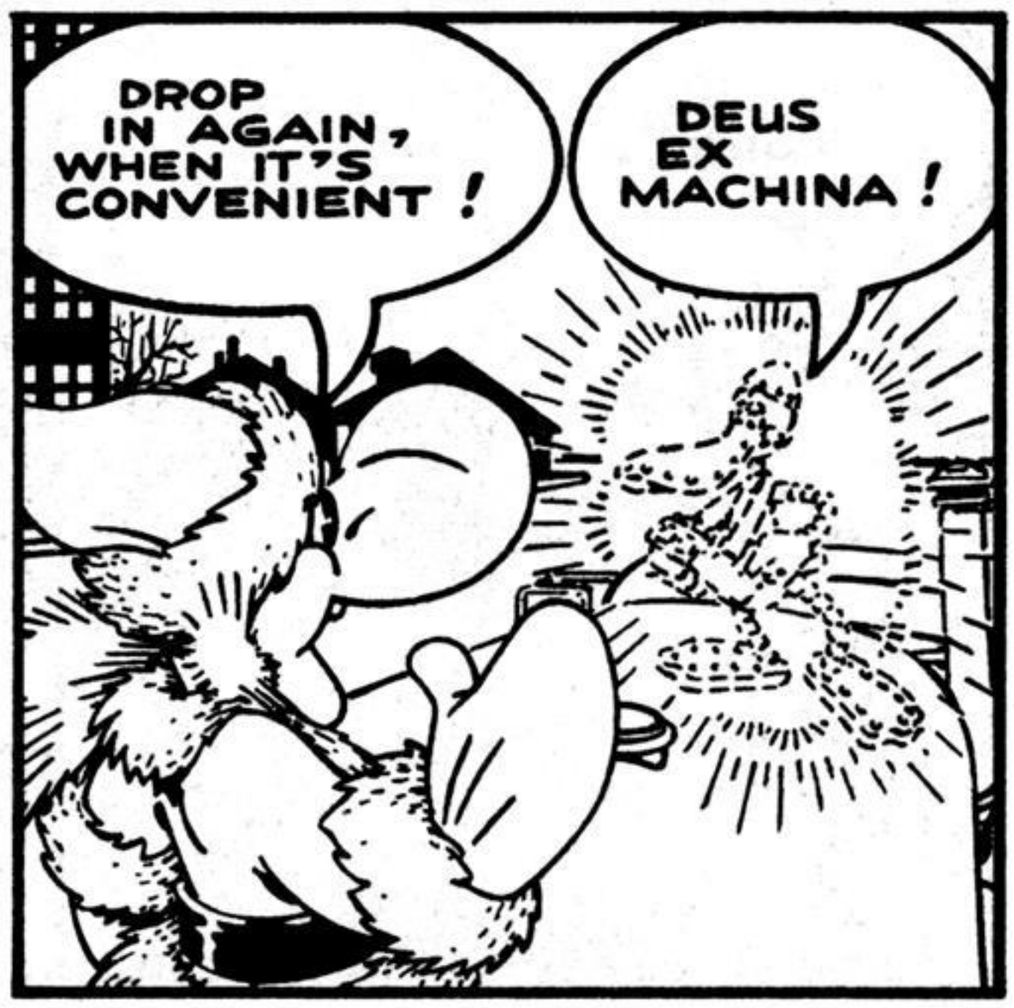
DUCKOID? AIN'T HE JUST A COMIC BOOK CHARACTER?
QUICK! GET ME OUT OF HERE, PAL!
SURE THING, BUDDY!

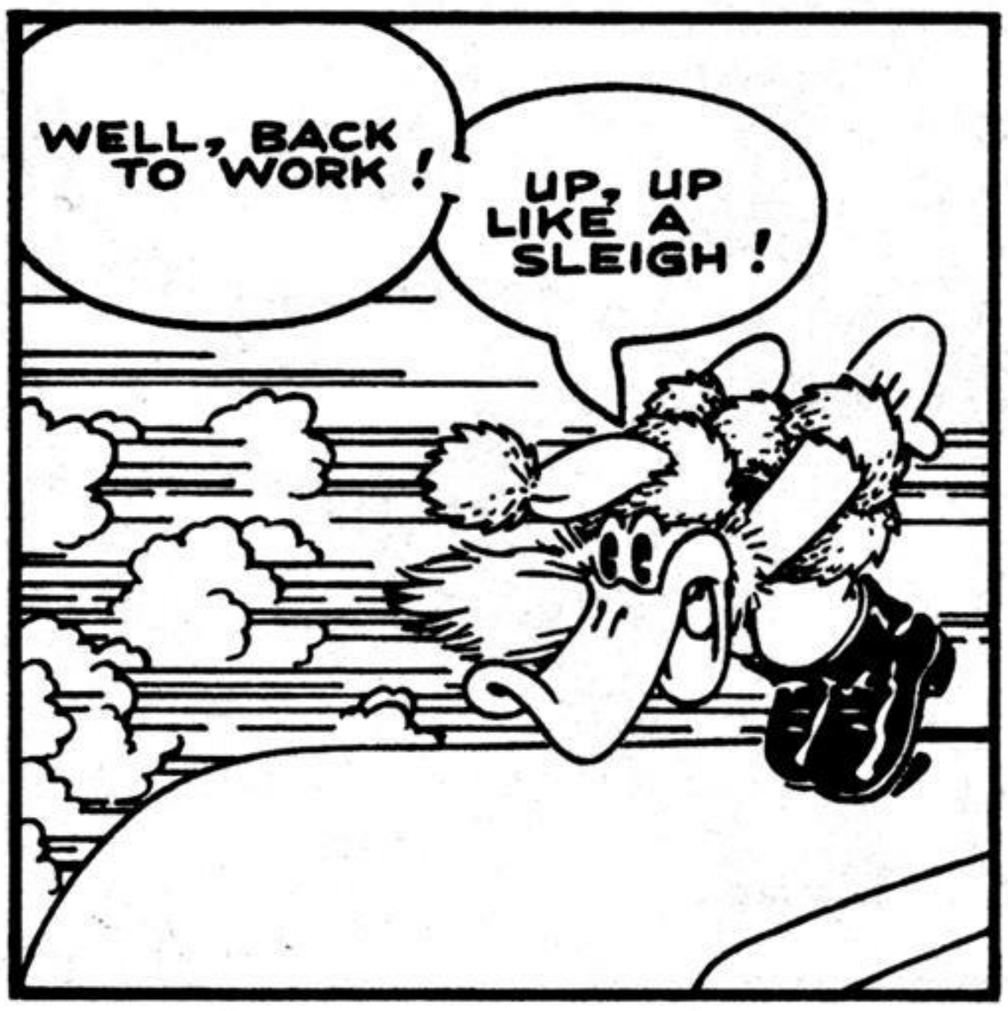
HEY COME BACK HERE, YOU LITTLE SNEAKS!
SAY DUCKOID, WHAT BRINGS YOU TO THIS DIMENSION WHERE YOU'RE ONLY KNOWN AS A COMIC BOOK CHARACTER?
HUH?
AVENUE ENDS
LOW SULFUR CHRISTMAS PUDDING
EXXACO
YUM-YUM

ISN'T THIS MAMMALIA?
NOPE! THIS IS EARTH Z-Y/X-MAS!

AWP!

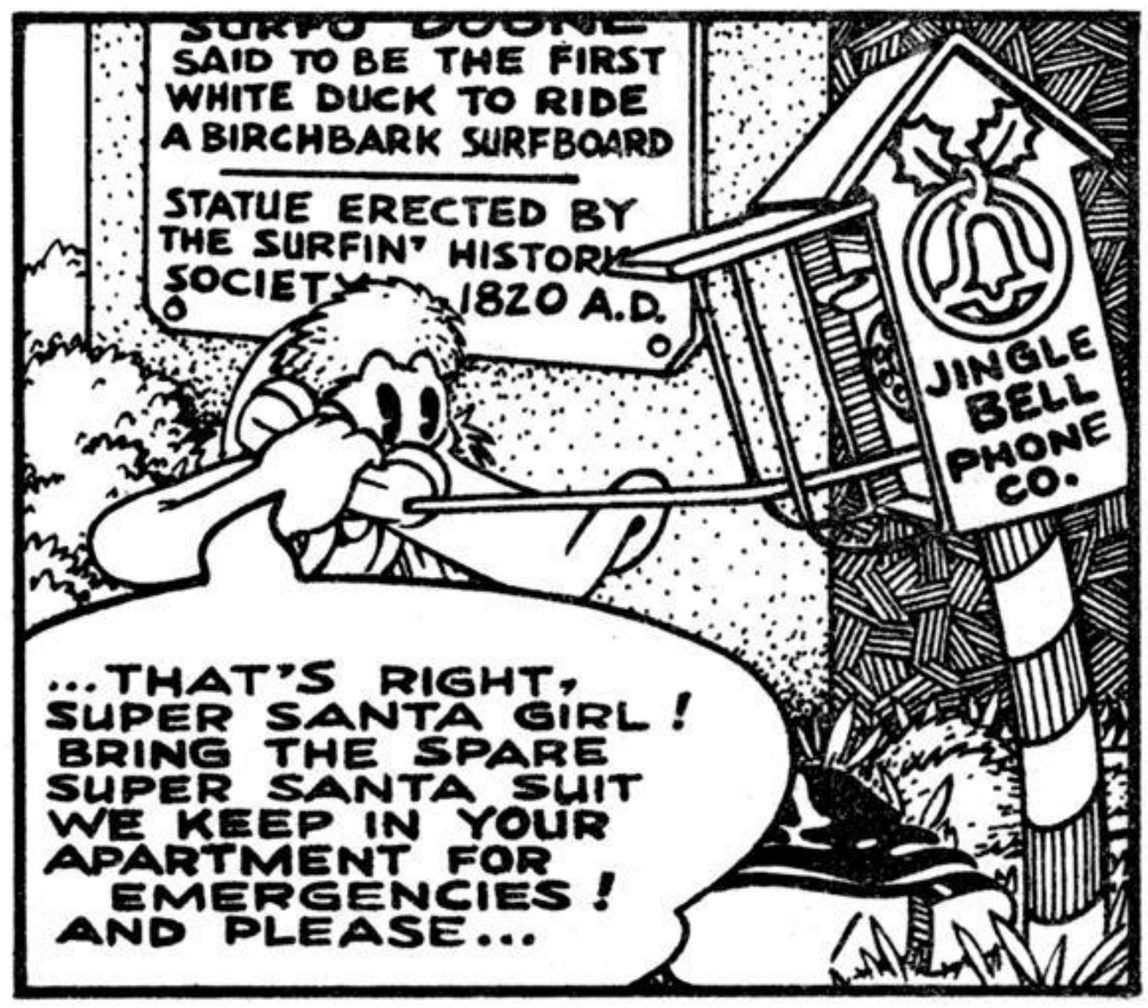

I PUSHED THE WRONG BUTTON! MY DIMENSIONAL CRAMMER SHOVED ME BETWEEN EARTH X-Y/Z-ROW AND EARTH BETA/8-UH, INSTEAD OF AROUND EARTH ALPHA/TAPPA-KEGGA AND ON THROUGH THE WHIZZO ZONE!
WELL DON'T FEEL BAD! YOUR STUPID BLUNDERING SAVED MY LIFE!


DROP IN AGAIN, WHEN IT'S CONVENIENT!
DEUS EX MACHINA!


WELL, BACK TO WORK!
UP, UP LIKE A SLEIGH!

MISTLETOE MUNICIPAL PARK
SPLUMP!
DONNER AND BLITZEN!

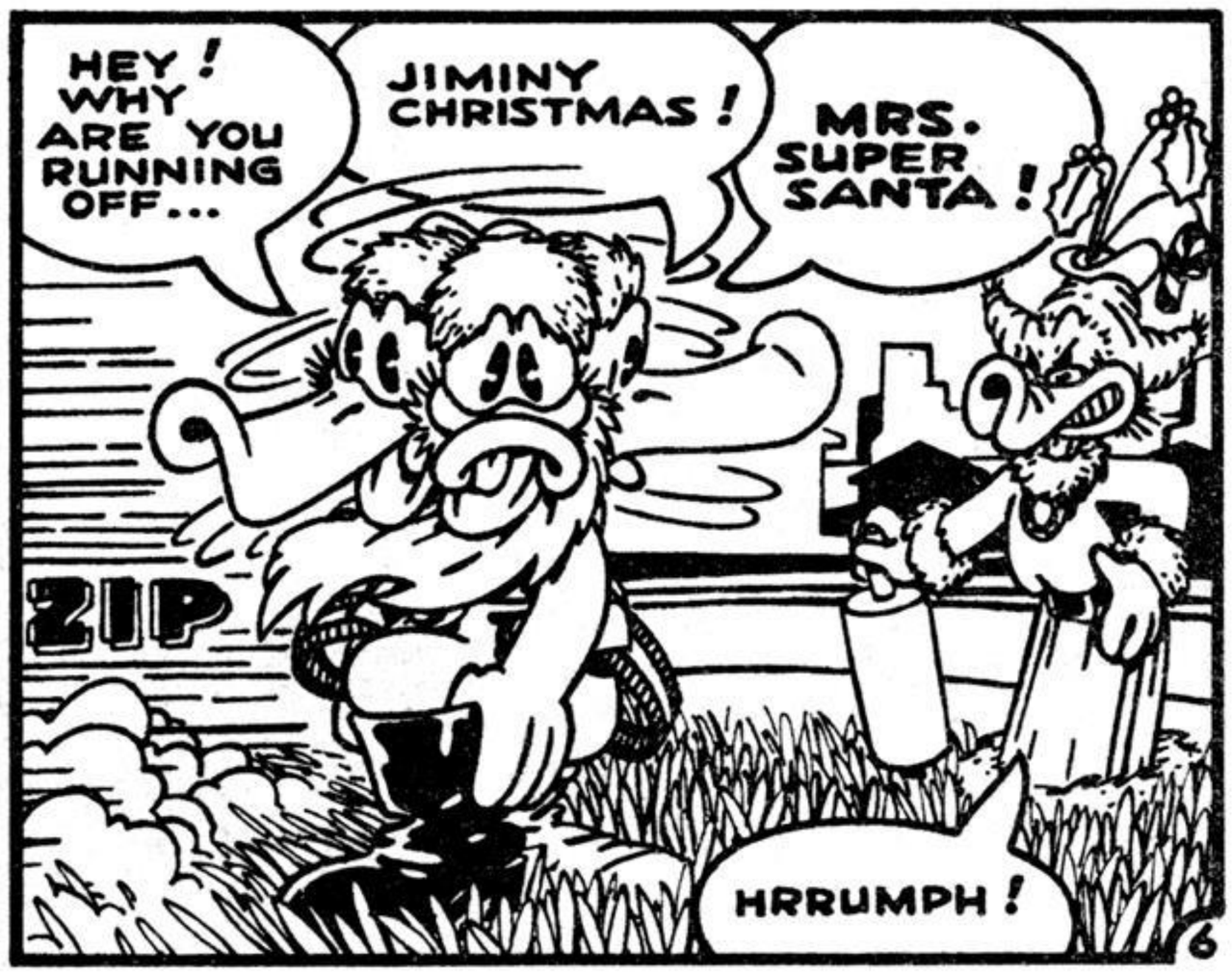
I'M TOO WEAK TO EVEN FLY! MY SUIT MUST HAVE BEEN SPLATTERED WITH THAT GREEN EGGNOG!
SURFO. BOONE

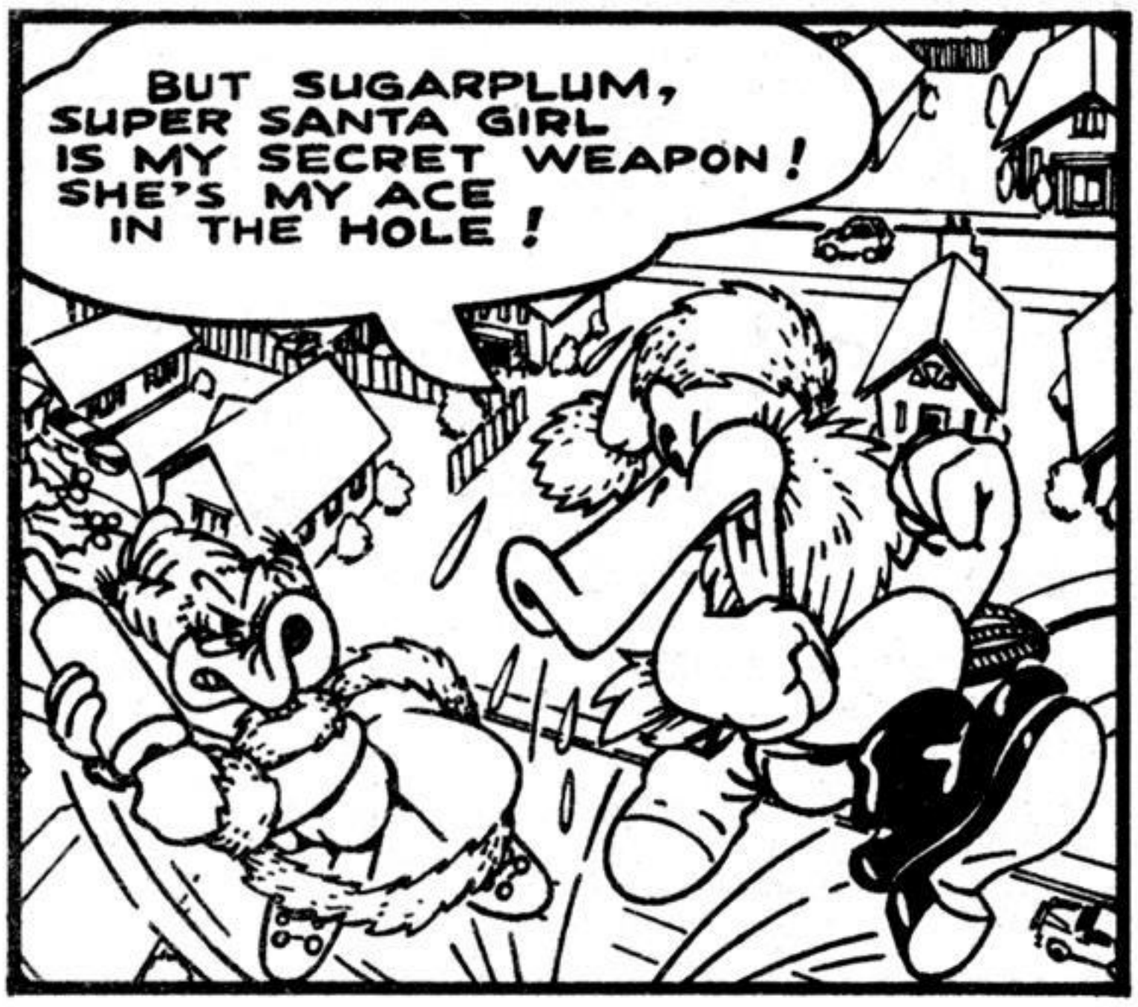

SAID TO BE THE FIRST WHITE DUCK TO RIDE A BIRCHBARK SURFBOARD
STATUE ERECTED BY THE SURFIN' HISTORY SOCIETY 1820 A.D.
JINGLE BELL PHONE CO.
...THAT'S RIGHT, SUPER SANTA GIRL! BRING THE SPARE SUPER SANTA SUIT WE KEEP IN YOUR APARTMENT FOR EMERGENCIES! AND PLEASE...

... HURRY!
ZIP

SUPER SANTA— GIRL, YOU'RE A LIFESAVER!
TEE HEE!
ZIP!

YOU'RE THE GREATEST! YOU ARE THE BEST LITTLE...


HEY! WHY ARE YOU RUNNING OFF...
JIMINY CHRISTMAS!
MRS. SUPER SANTA!
ZIP
HRRUMPH!


BUT SUGARPLUM, SUPER SANTA GIRL IS MY SECRET WEAPON! SHE'S MY ACE IN THE HOLE!

I MIGHT BELIEVE YOU IF YOU CAME HOME ONCE IN A WHILE!
DID YOU KNOW THAT ALL OF THE GOSSIPS CALL OUR PLACE THE TOYSHOP OF SOLITUDE ?!?
BAWNK

BE FAIR NOW! I'M ONLY GONE FROM HOME ONE DAY AND ONE NIGHT OUT OF THE ENTIRE YEAR!

YOU OLD CREEP! EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT DAYS AND NIGHTS LAST SIX MONTHS APIECE AT THE NORTH POLE!

SQUANCH
*©卐!☭!!

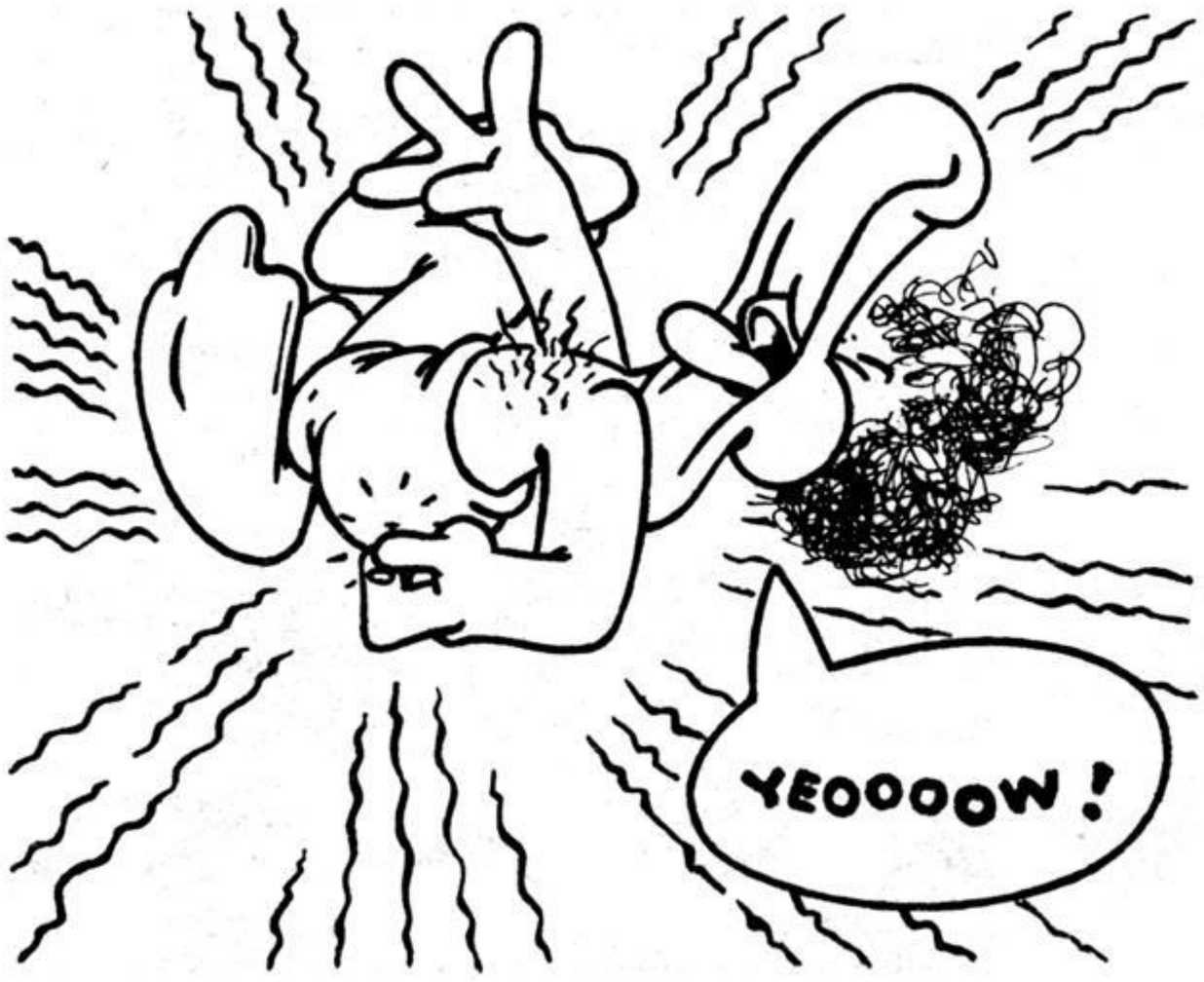
WOW! I'VE BEEN READING TOO MANY HOLIDAY COMICS, LATELY!
DYNAMIC DUCKOID

?
DING DONG
HIPST
ALL DISCO ISM

WHO ON EARTH COULD THAT BE AT THIS HOUR OF THE MORNING ?

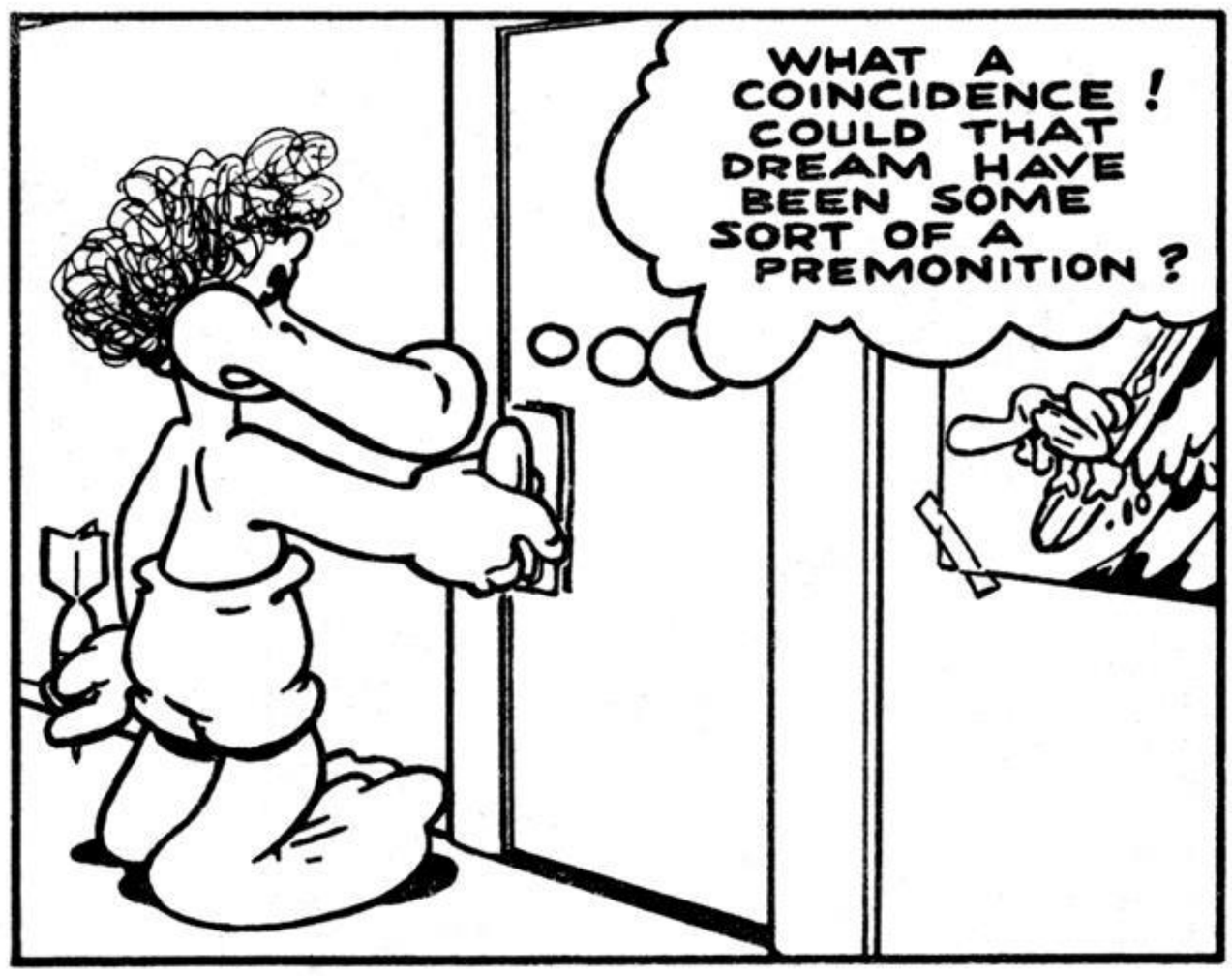
NOW I'VE GOTCHA, SUPER SANTA !

I CAN SEE THROUGH THAT STUPID DISGUISE OF YOURS !
OH NO ! I'M STILL DREAMING ! THIS PIN SHOULD WAKE ME UP, THOUGH !

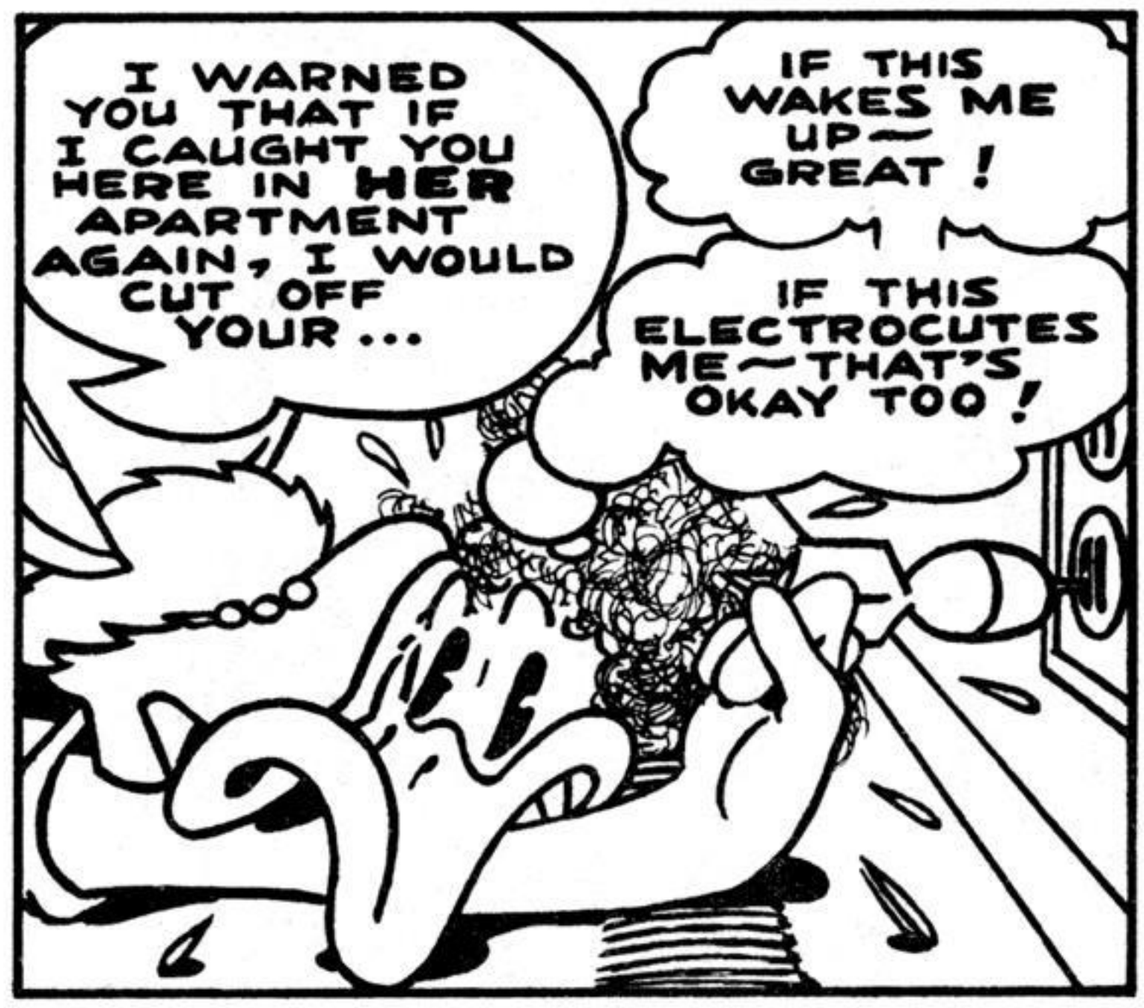

YEOOOOW !

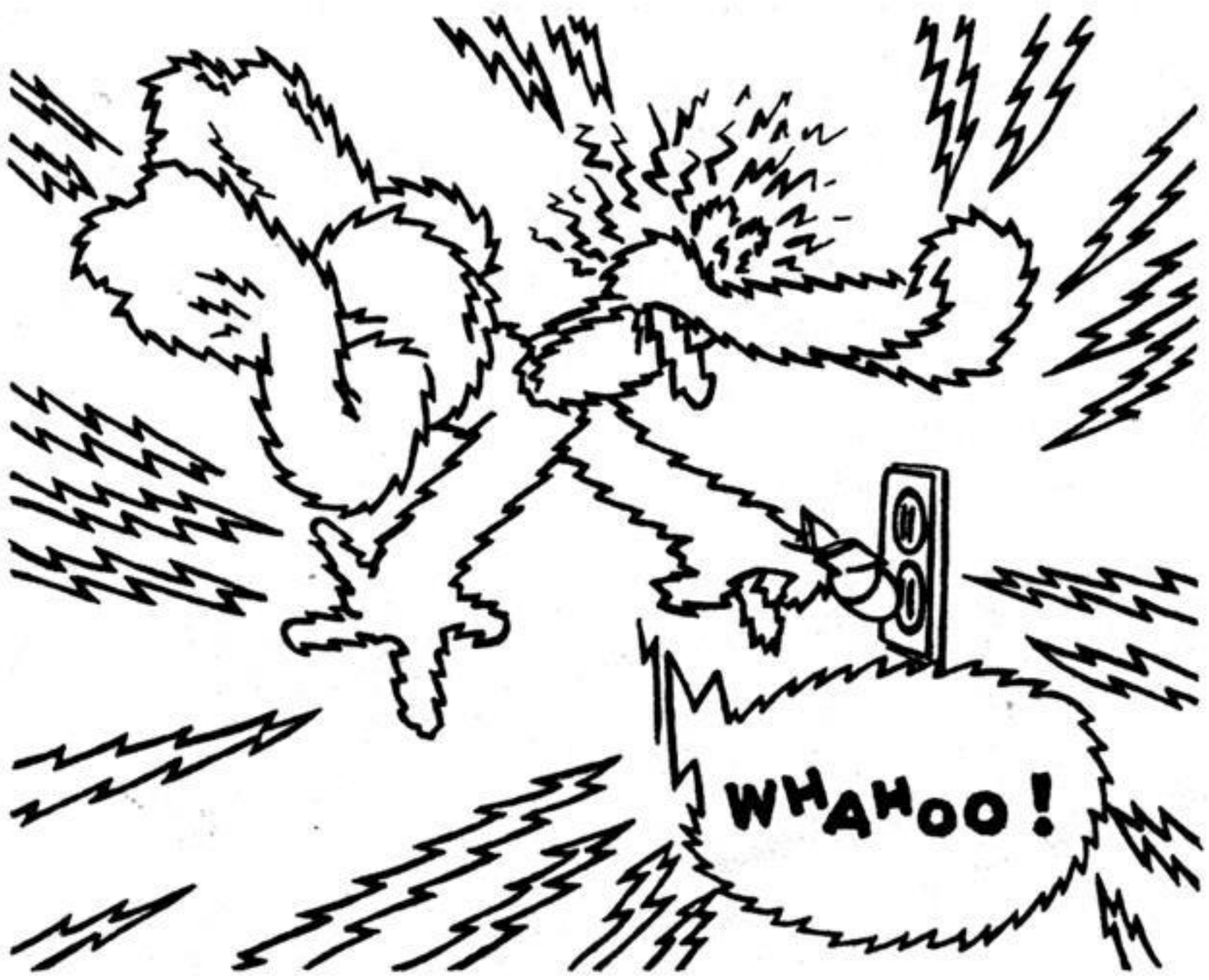
DISCO
COUNTRY & WESTERN
CLASSICAL
BOY, HAVE I BEEN READING TOO MANY COMIC BOOKS ! EVEN IN MY DREAMS I'M DREAMING OF COMICS !
POWER CARROT

!
DING DONG
MR. BEAR
HOW GROSS!


WHAT A COINCIDENCE ! COULD THAT DREAM HAVE BEEN SOME SORT OF A PREMONITION ?

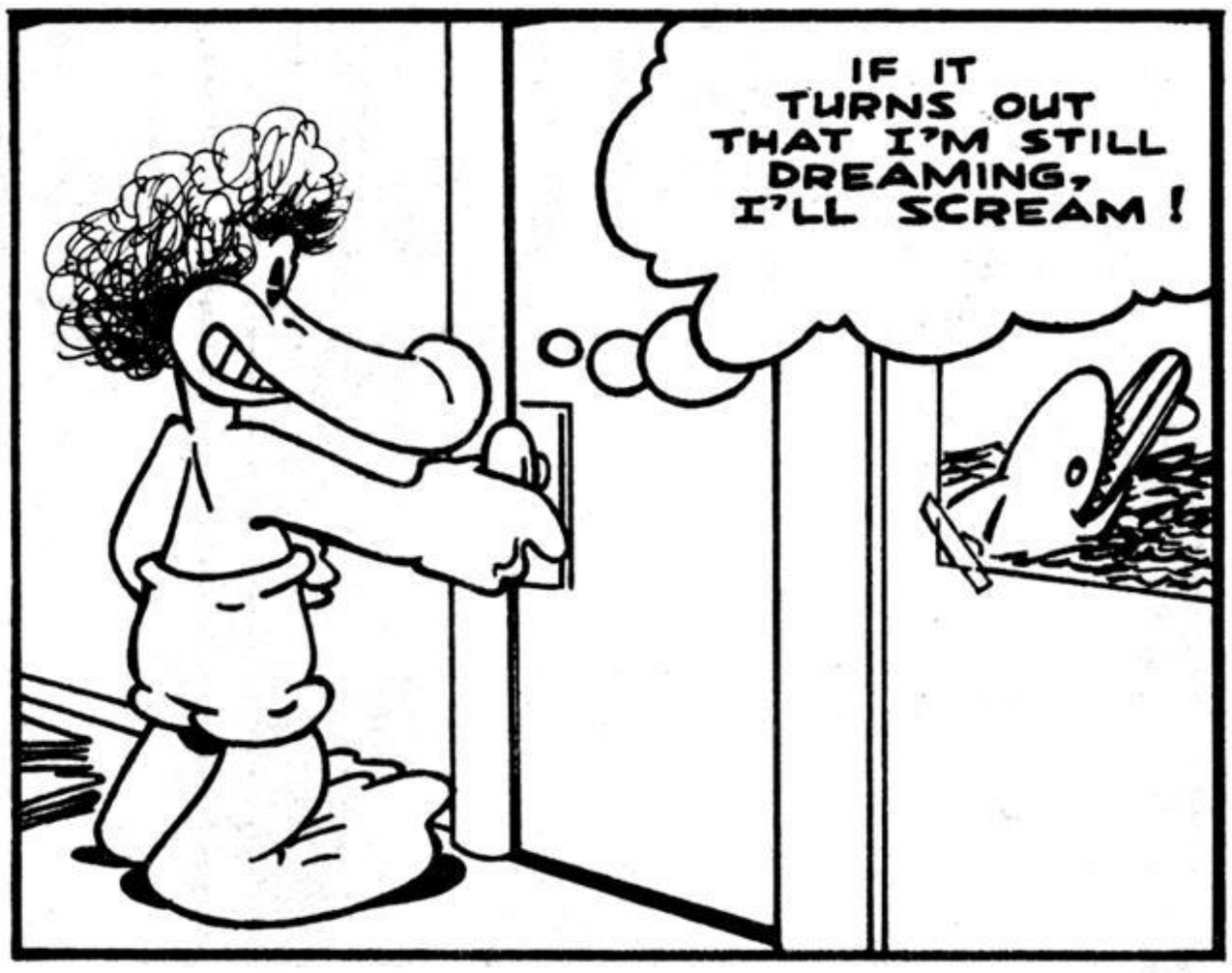
I THOUGHT I'D FIND YOU HERE, YOU OLD GOAT !


I WARNED YOU THAT IF I CAUGHT YOU HERE IN HER APARTMENT AGAIN, I WOULD CUT OFF YOUR ...
IF THIS WAKES ME UP— GREAT !
IF THIS ELECTROCUTES ME—THAT'S OKAY TOO !


WHAHOO !

I'VE BEEN READING TOO MANY COMIC BOOKS, AND SETTING TOO MANY MOUSE TRAPS !

GASP!
DING DONG
SPEEDO
ZIP


IF IT TURNS OUT THAT I'M STILL DREAMING, I'LL SCREAM!

HERE'S YOUR SUIT, SANTA!

EEEEAAAAHH

HAK
?!

CHUCKIE BABY! AREN'T YOU GOING TO PLAY SANTA CLAUS AT THE SURFERS' BENEFIT?
NOT NOW, FUNNETTE! I'VE GOT A HEADACHE!
THE END!

Carol Lay's

GOOD GIRLS

"It had something to do with her hair..."
She's got the job
(love-lorn columnist for
a great metropolitan newspaper).
She's got the friends
(Ultra-Ma, Stupendo Boy).
She's got the costume
(covered with hearts, no less).
But she just can't fly!
She's Monica Saunders.
Ms. Lonelyhearts.
Oh, yeah.
She's got the hair,
too.

Find out why they're good.

ON SALE IN NOVEMBER

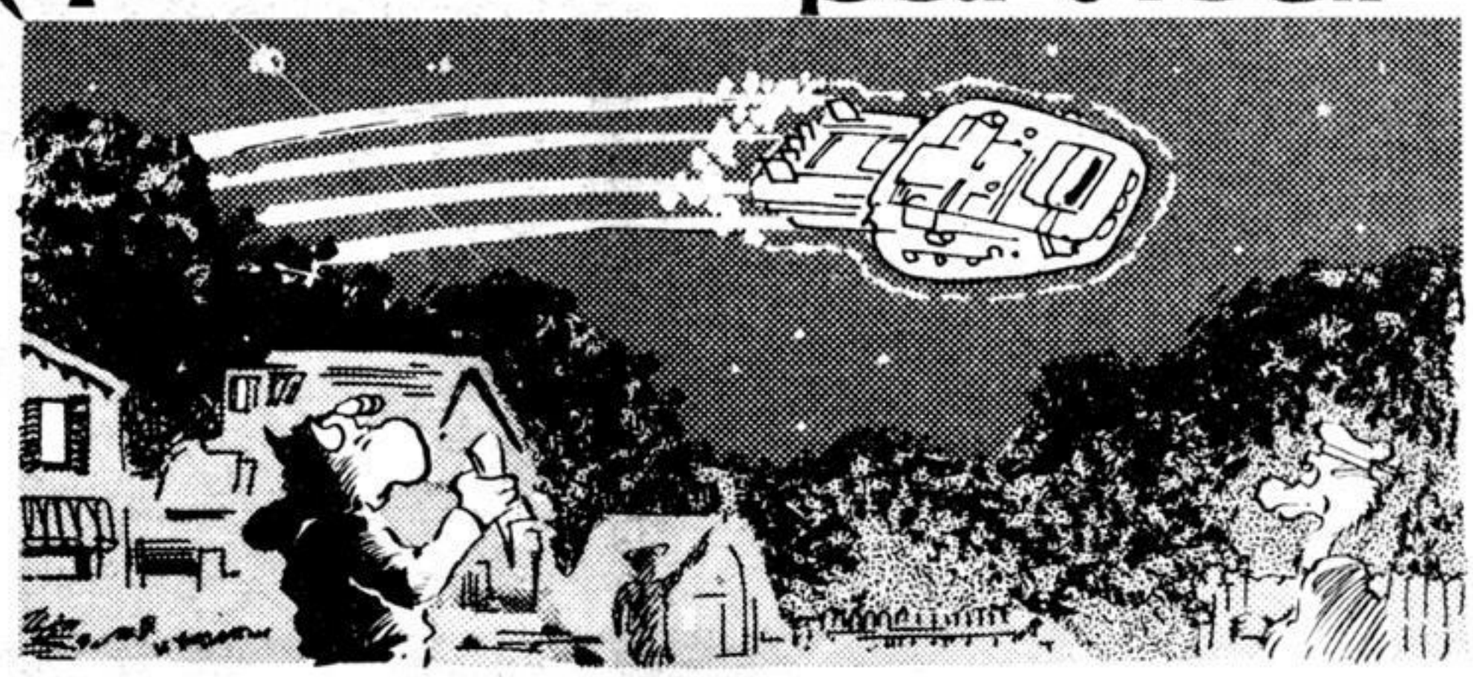
FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

© 1986 Carol Lay

LIONHEART part four

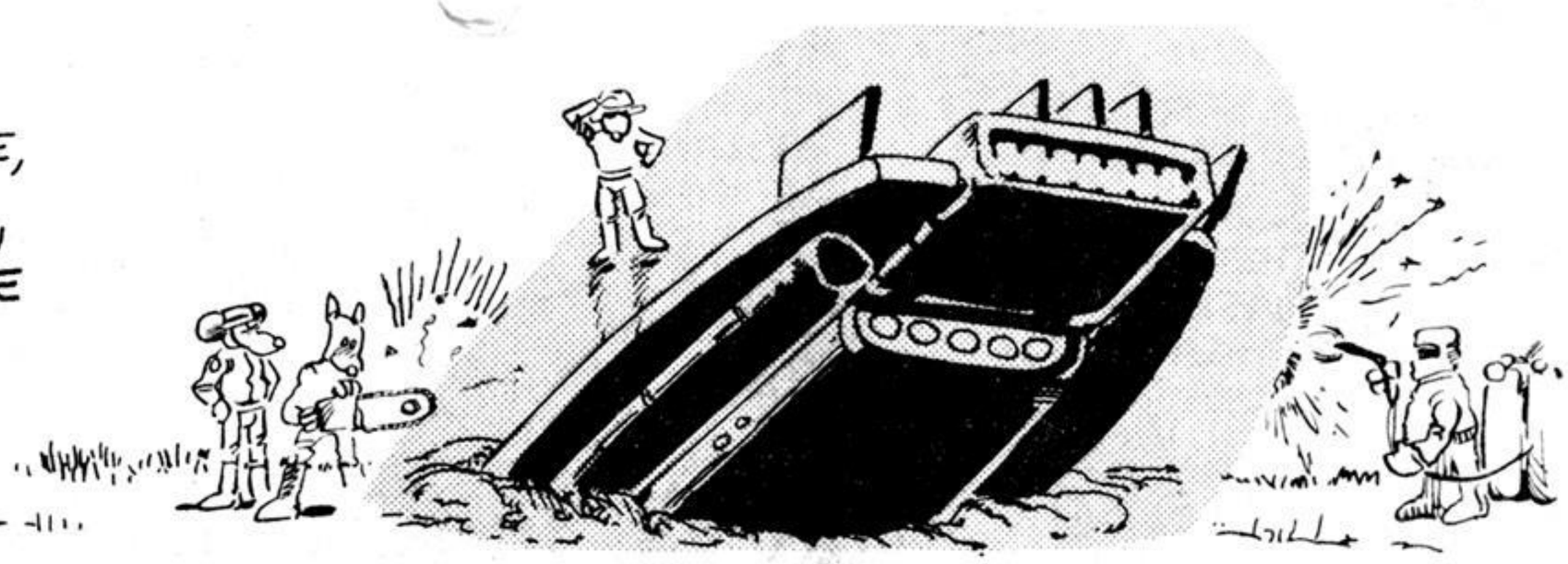
I SUPPOSE YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON HERE.

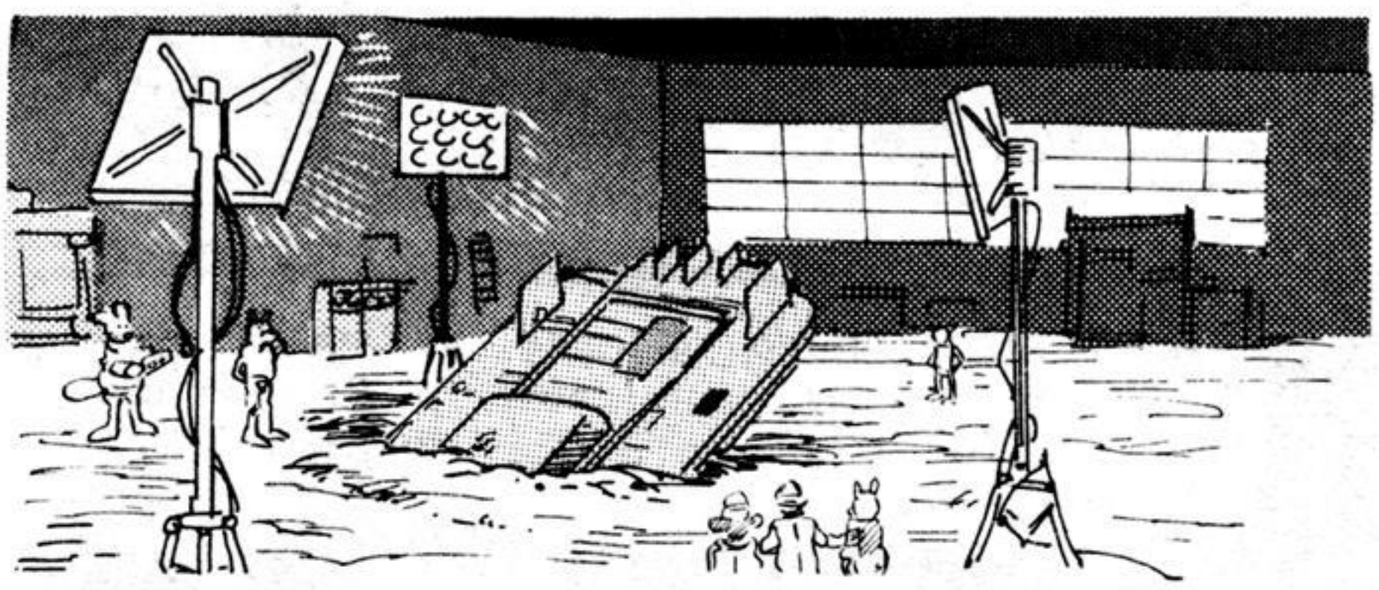
IT WAS BACK IN THE FALL OF '71, MY SECOND YEAR AS **SHERIFF**, WHEN THE **GEEX' SPACESHIP** LIT UP THE NIGHT SKY OVER **WAKO**.



LATER THAT EVENING I GOT A CALL FROM A GUY WHO SAID THE UFO HAD **LANDED** A FEW MILES FROM HIS PROPERTY. I DROVE ON OVER TO HAVE A LOOK-SEE, BUT BY THE TIME I GOT THERE, THE **MILITARY** HAD MOVED IN AND **SEALED OFF** THE LANDING SITE.

THEY WERE AFTER THE SHIP, OF COURSE, BUT THE SAUCER WAS **PROTECTED** BY ONE OF THOSE **FORCE FIELD THINGS**. YOU COULDN'T GET ANY CLOSER THAN A COUPLE OF FEET.





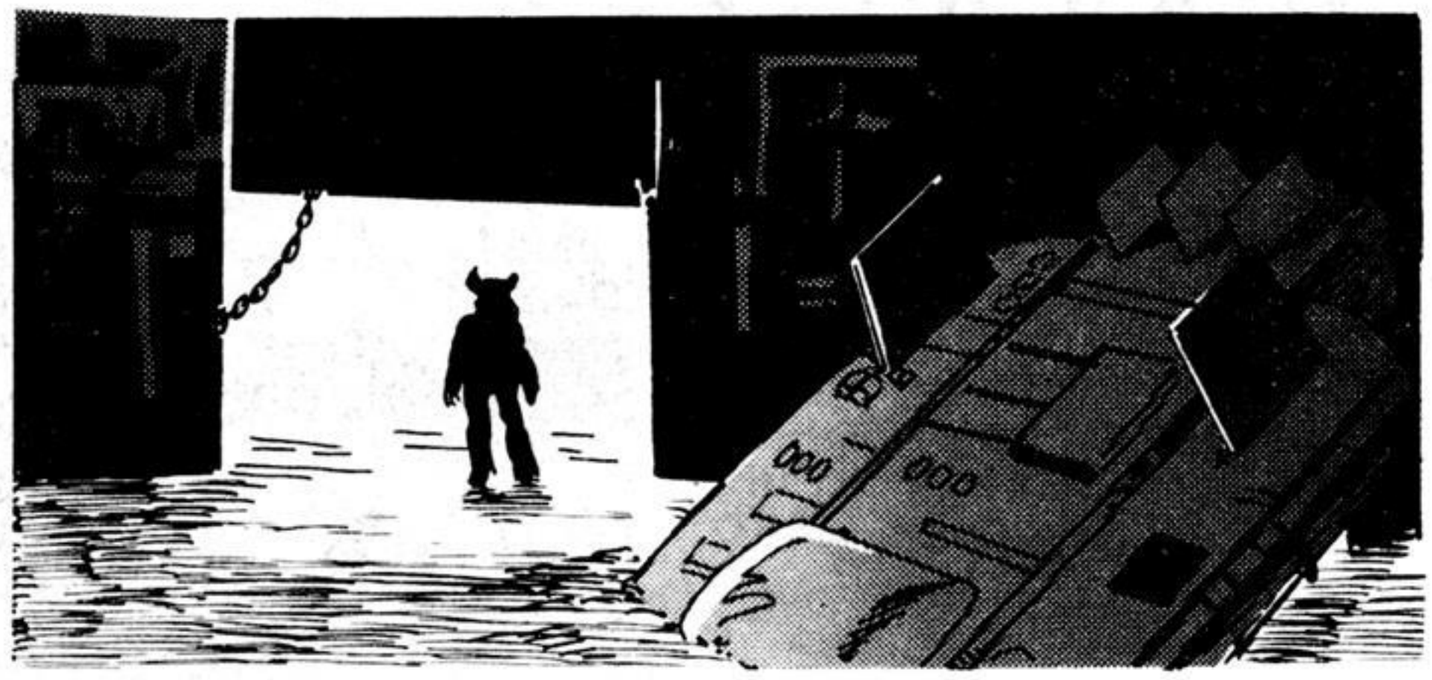
IN A MATTER OF DAYS THEY BUILT A **PHONY WAREHOUSE** AROUND THE CRAFT SO THEY COULD CONTINUE THEIR EFFORTS IN **SECRET**.
I WAS ALLOWED ACCESS AS LONG AS I **SWORE** TO **SILENCE**.

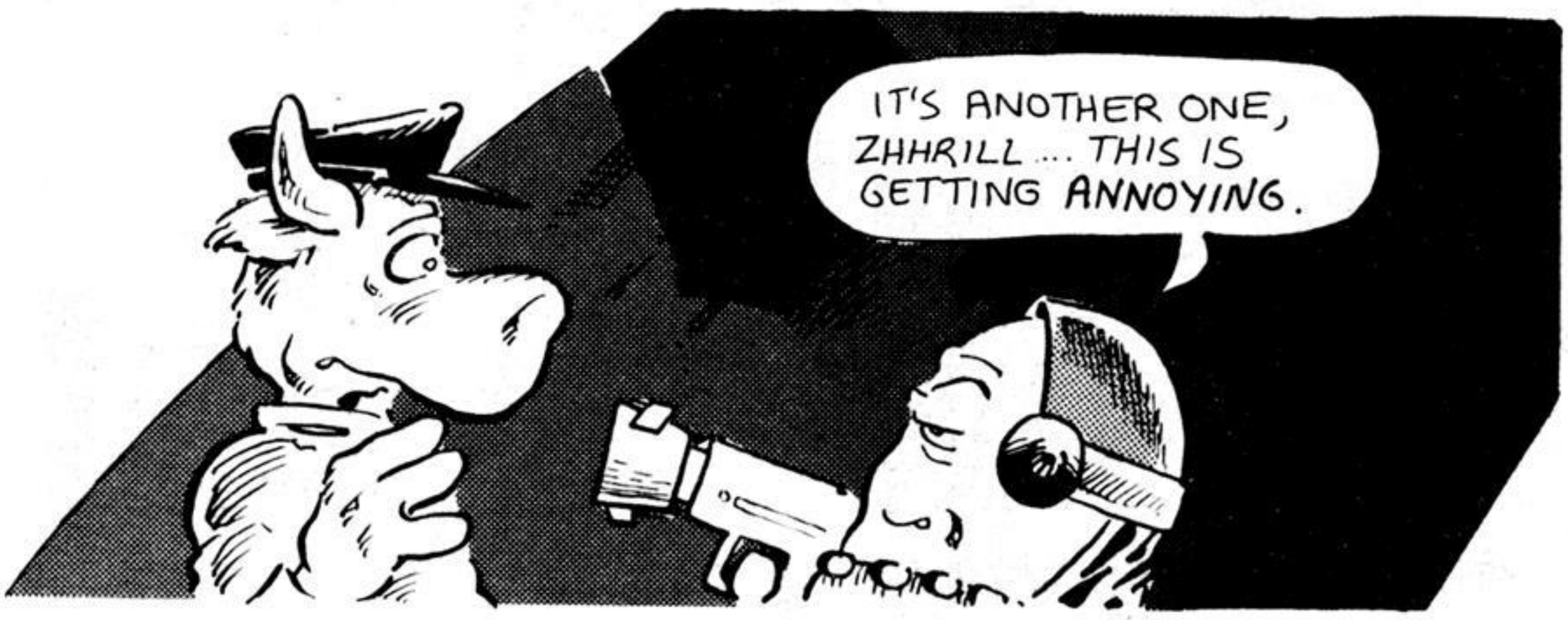
BUT ONE MORNING I STOPPED BY, ONLY TO FIND THE POST **DESERTED**. ALL THE INVESTIGATORS WERE **GONE**, EXCEPT FOR ONE, AND **HE** WAS ON HIS WAY OUT.

I **QUESTIONED** HIM, AND HE ANSWERED ME IN A HOLLOW MONOTONE.

CURIOUS, I LOOKED INSIDE THE WAREHOUSE. THE SHIP WAS STILL THERE, BUT ALL THE EQUIPMENT HAD BEEN MOVED OUT... THE PLACE WAS UNNERVINGLY QUIET.

I DECIDED THIS WAY MY CHANCE TO GET A CLOSE LOOK AT THE SPACESHIP.





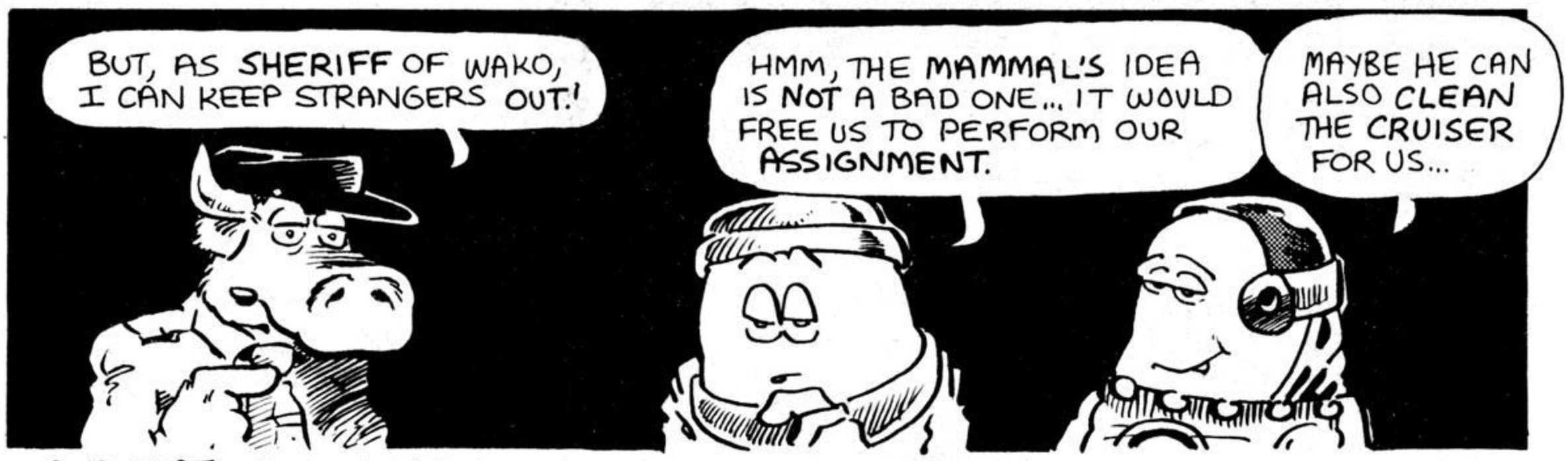
AND THEN I MET THE GEEX.

ONE OF THEM STEPPED OUT OF THE DARKNESS, AIMING HIS GUN AT ME.

MY HANDS WENT UP AND MY KNEES WENT OUT.

THE GEEX HAD ERASED EVERYBODY'S MEMORY AND MADE THEM BELIEVE THEY HAD FINISHED THEIR INVESTIGATION

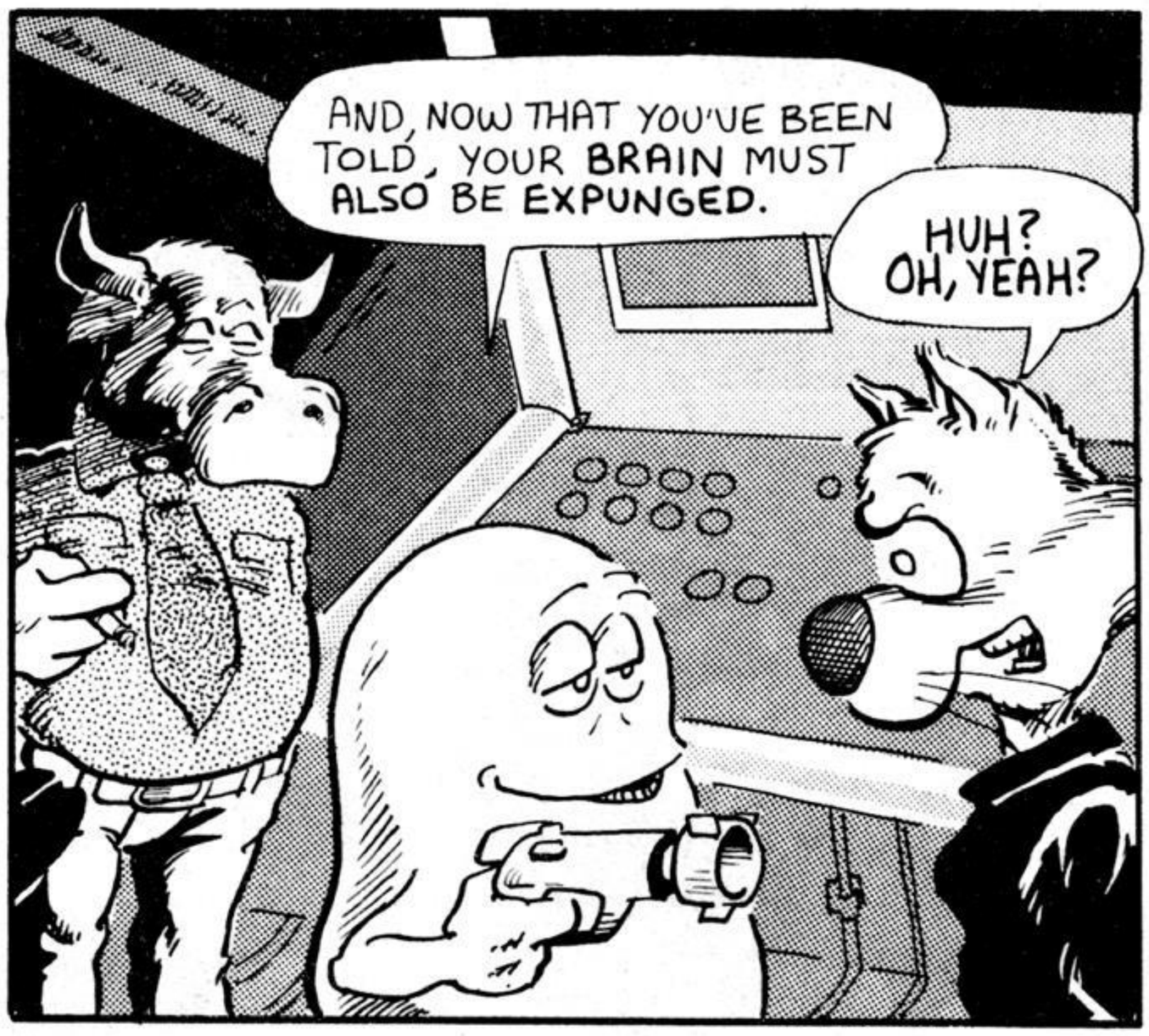
OF COURSE, I DIDN'T KNOW THAT THEN... I THOUGHT THEY WERE ABOUT TO KILL ME... SO I TRIED TO MAKE A DEAL.



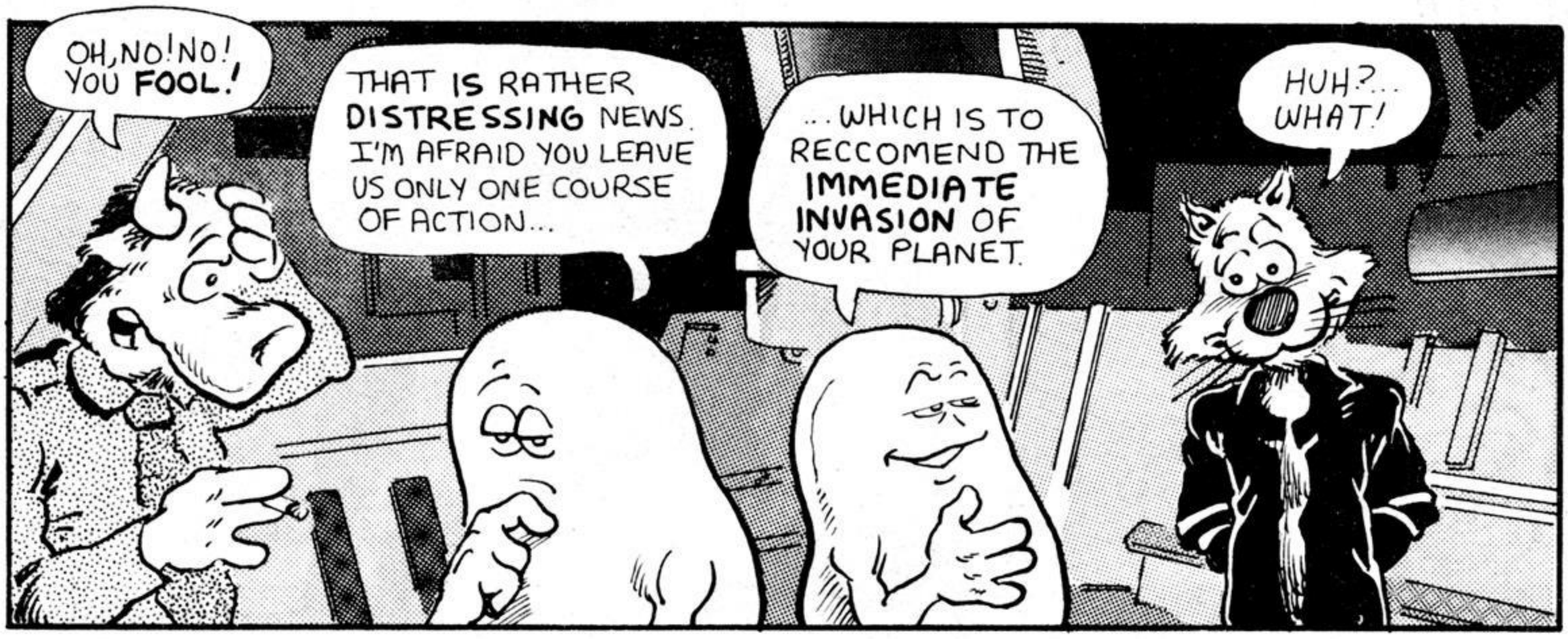
... AND THAT WAS HOW THE GEEX CAME TO STAY HERE IN WAKO.

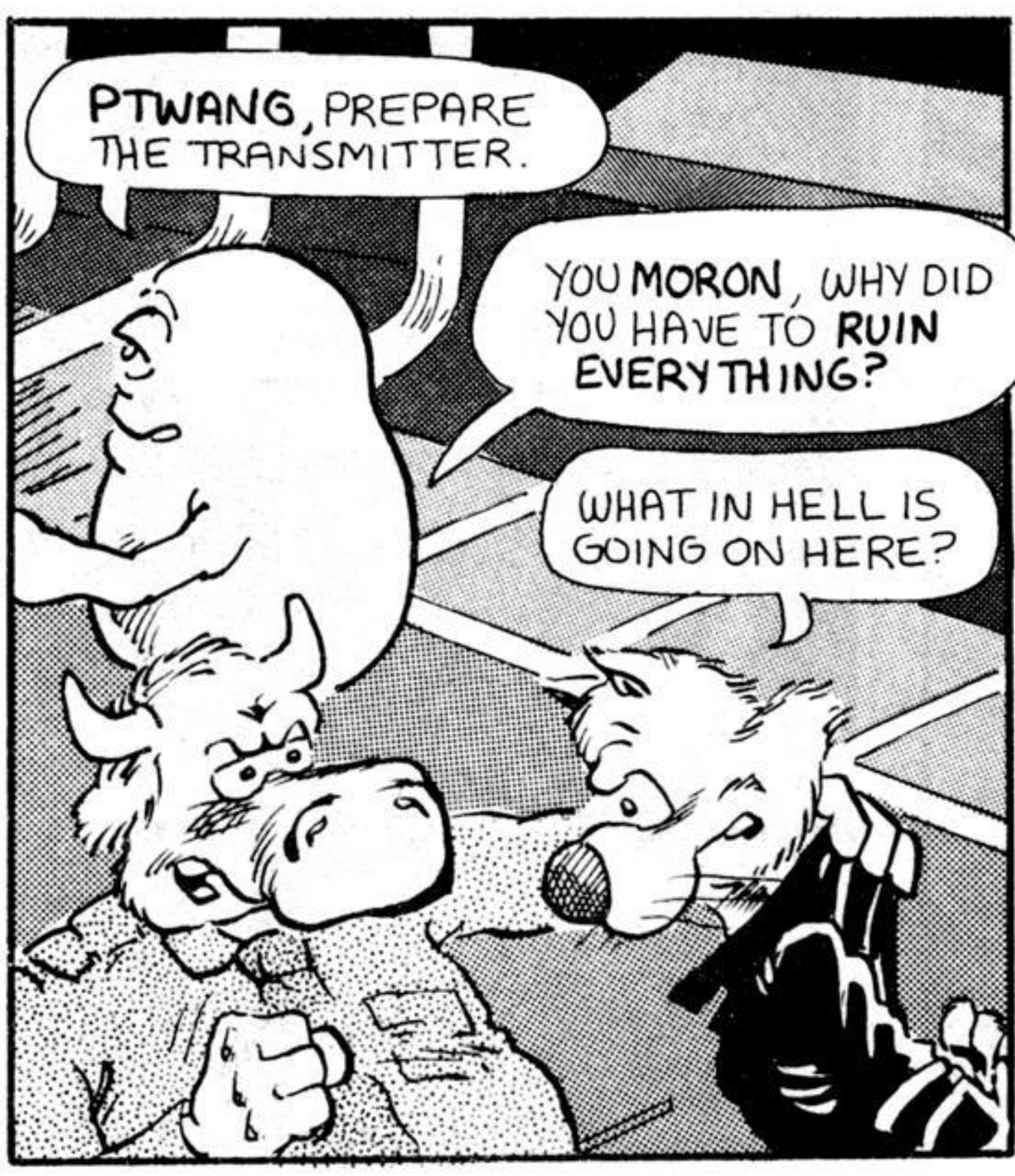
détente

STORY & ART by TOM STAZER ©1986


AND, NOW THAT YOU'VE BEEN TOLD, YOUR BRAIN MUST ALSO BE EXPUNGED.
HUH? OH, YEAH?

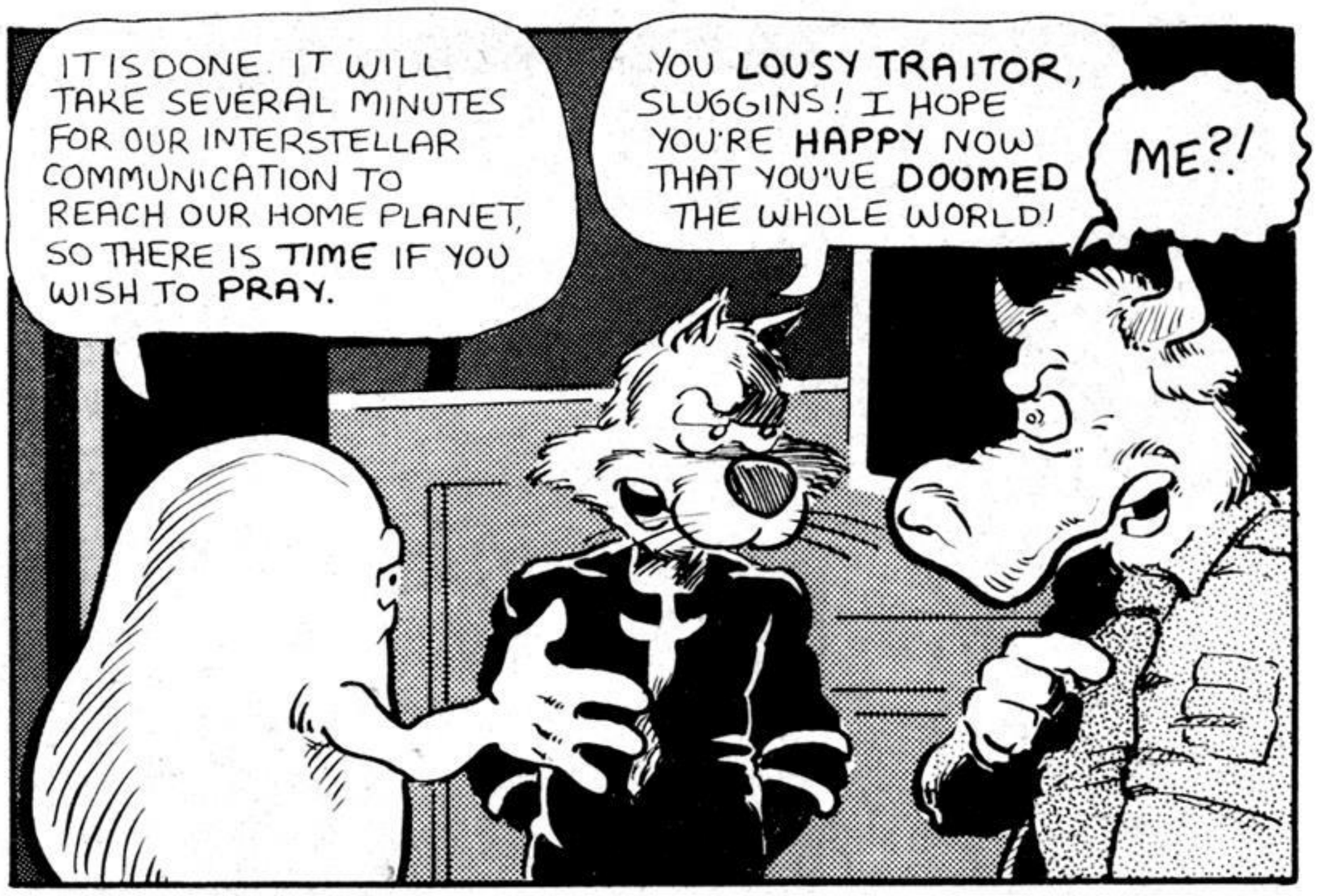
WELL, IT'LL DO YOU NO GOOD, YOU LITTLE CREEP! I'VE ALREADY REVEALED YOUR EXISTENCE. I DROVE TO AN OUT OF TOWN PHONE AND CALLED MY EDITOR. A WHOLE TEAM OF REPORTERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS IS ON ITS WAY HERE AT THIS MOMENT!


OH, NO! NO! YOU FOOL!
THAT IS RATHER DISTRESSING NEWS. I'M AFRAID YOU LEAVE US ONLY ONE COURSE OF ACTION...
...WHICH IS TO RECCOMEND THE IMMEDIATE INVASION OF YOUR PLANET.
HUH?... WHAT!

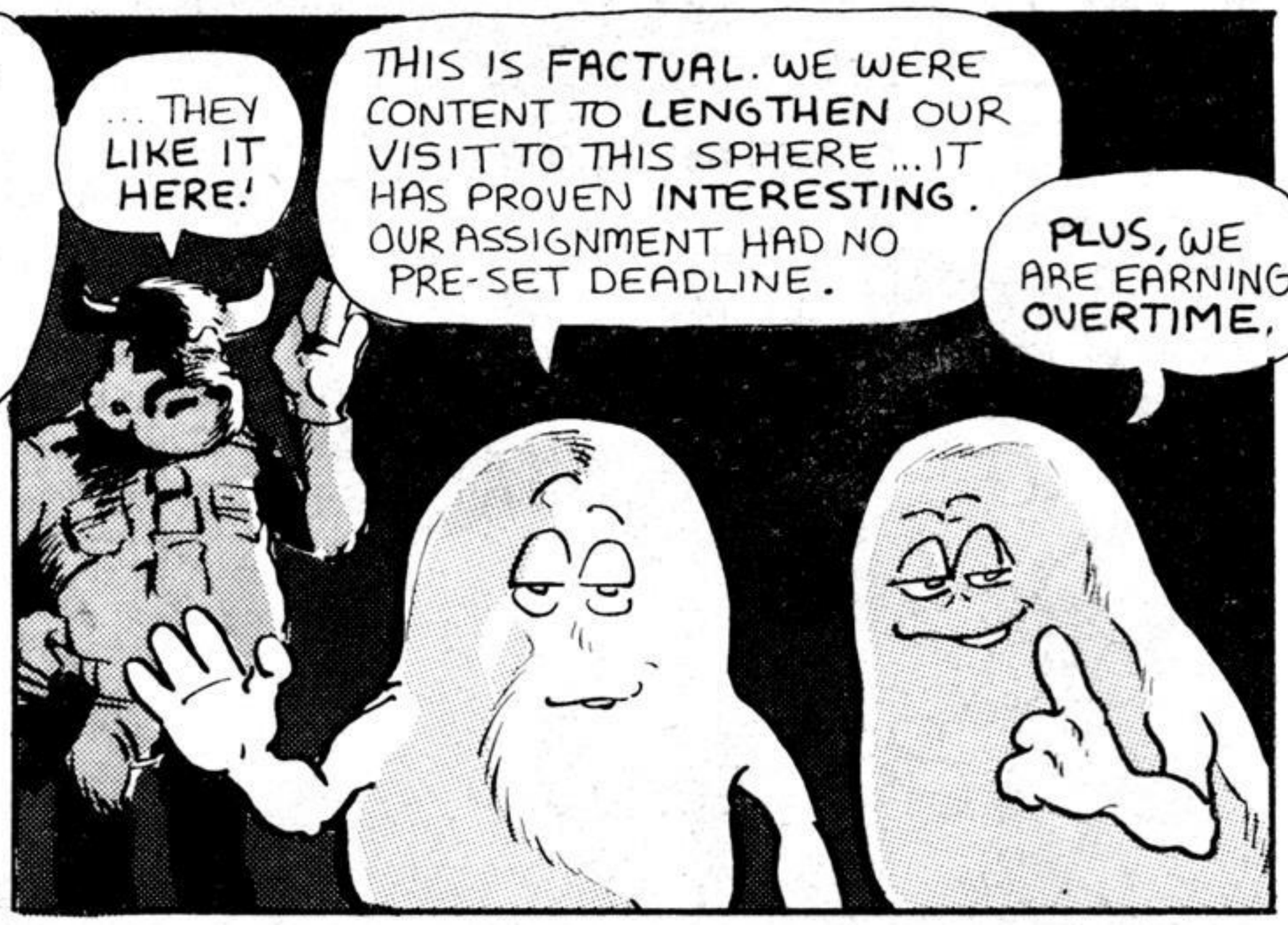

PTWANG, PREPARE THE TRANSMITTER.
YOU MORON, WHY DID YOU HAVE TO RUIN EVERYTHING?
WHAT IN HELL IS GOING ON HERE?

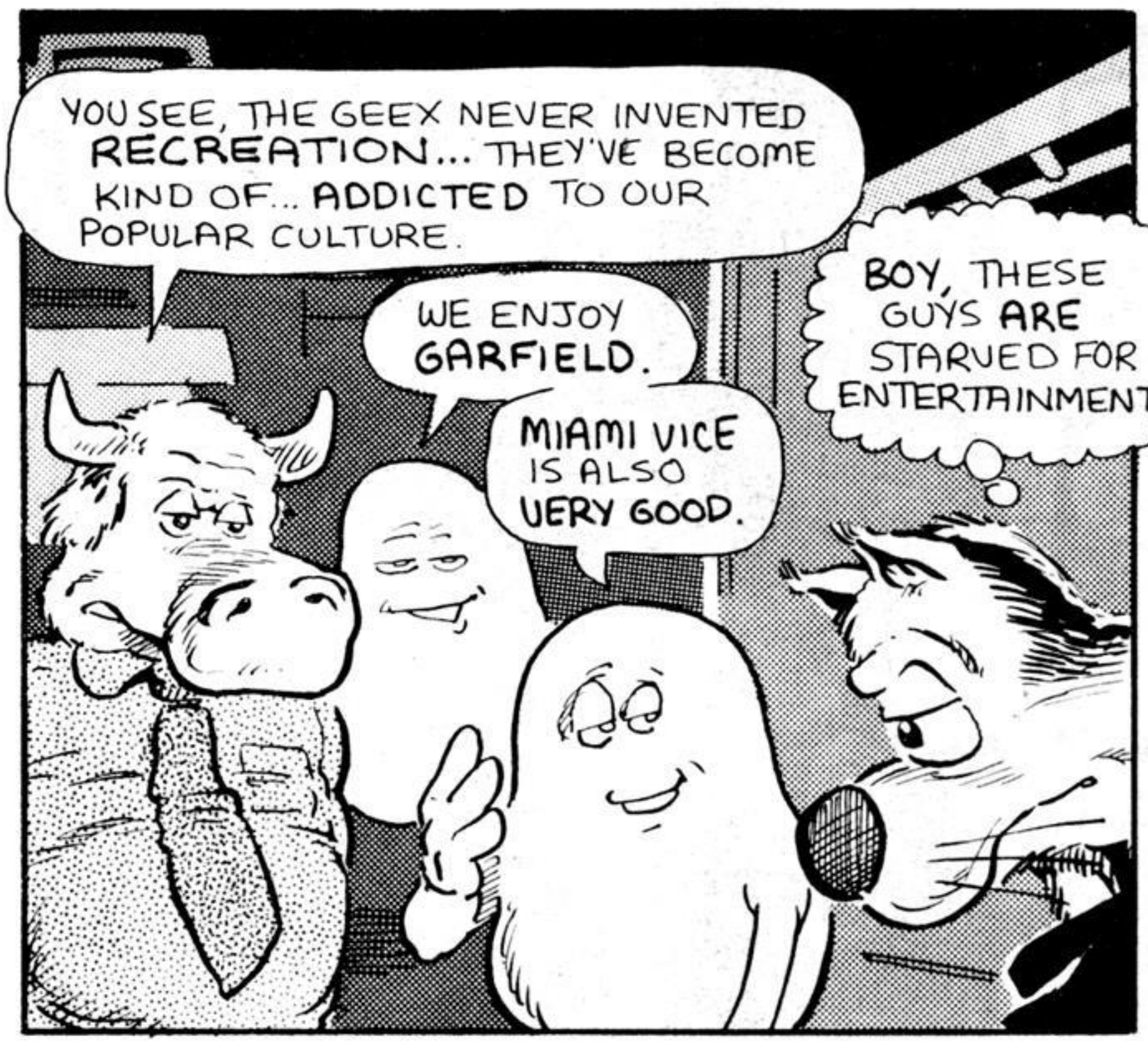
THE GEEX ARE INVASION SCOUTS! THAT'S WHY I WAS HELPING THEM!
TO SAVE THE EARTH!
I'VE MISSED SOMETHING HERE...

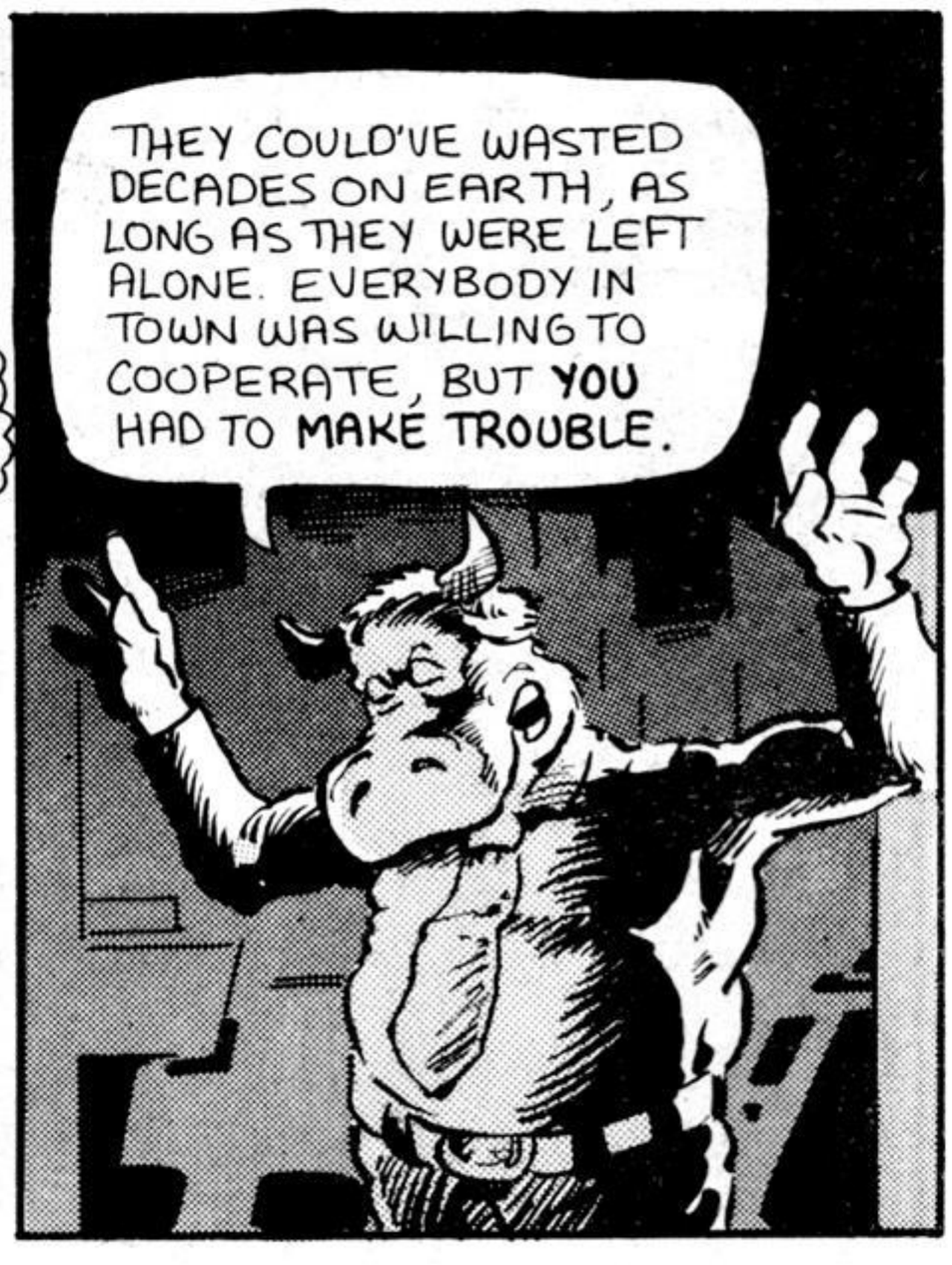
Y VOLLO TRA LINSKI ZANTI... KLOO VELL O KREE CHANG WAH STAH FAN OH. LONZLO TRINZINI OH KROBAL OSTA.


IT IS DONE. IT WILL TAKE SEVERAL MINUTES FOR OUR INTERSTELLAR COMMUNICATION TO REACH OUR HOME PLANET, SO THERE IS TIME IF YOU WISH TO PRAY.
YOU LOUSY TRAITOR, SLUGGINS! I HOPE YOU'RE HAPPY NOW THAT YOU'VE DOOMED THE WHOLE WORLD!
ME?!

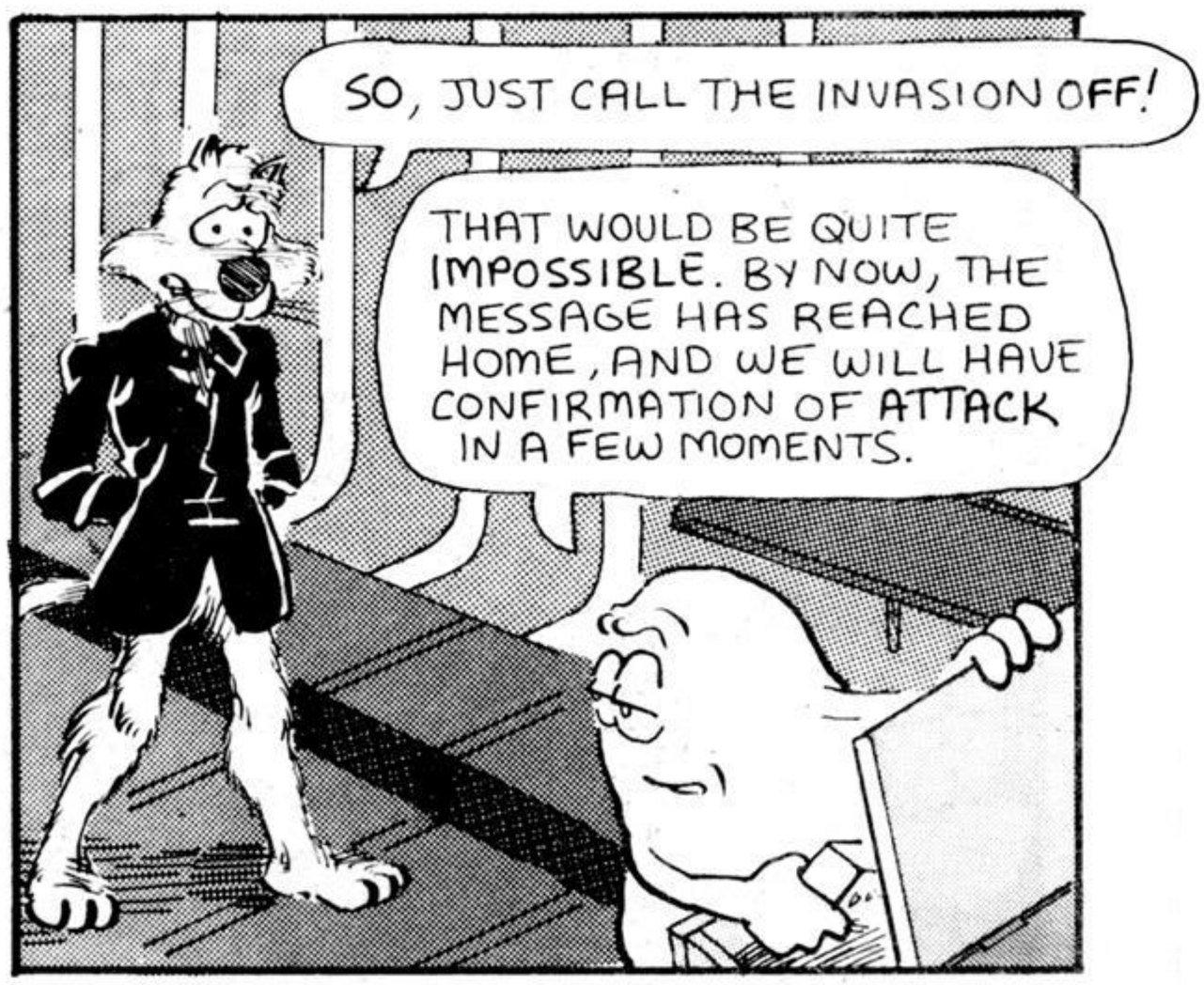
WHY, YOU DUMB FELINE, YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S RESPONSIBLE! THERE WAS NO INVASION 'TILL YOU OPENED YOUR BIG YAP! THE GEEX WERE IN NO BIG HURRY TO CONTACT THEIR BOSSES.

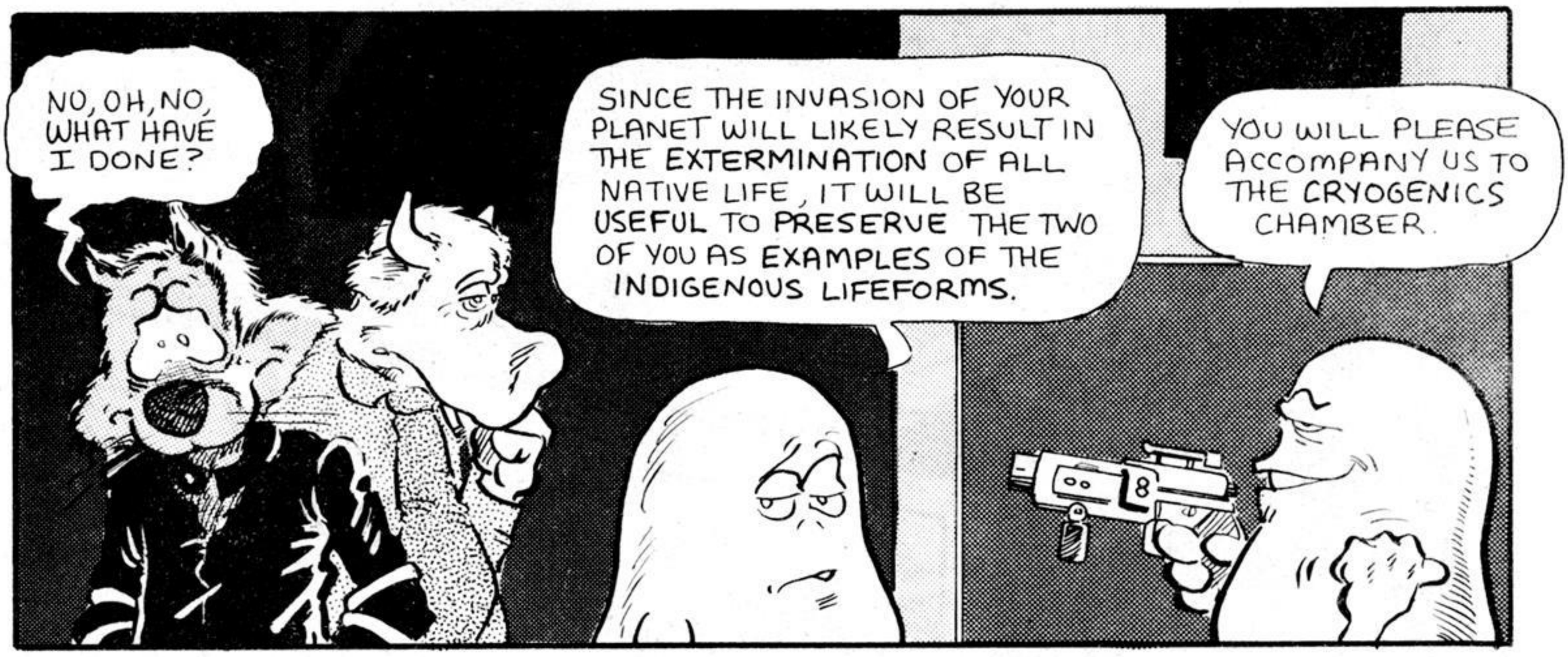

... THEY LIKE IT HERE!
THIS IS FACTUAL. WE WERE CONTENT TO LENGTHEN OUR VISIT TO THIS SPHERE ... IT HAS PROVEN INTERESTING. OUR ASSIGNMENT HAD NO PRE-SET DEADLINE.
PLUS, WE ARE EARNING OVERTIME.

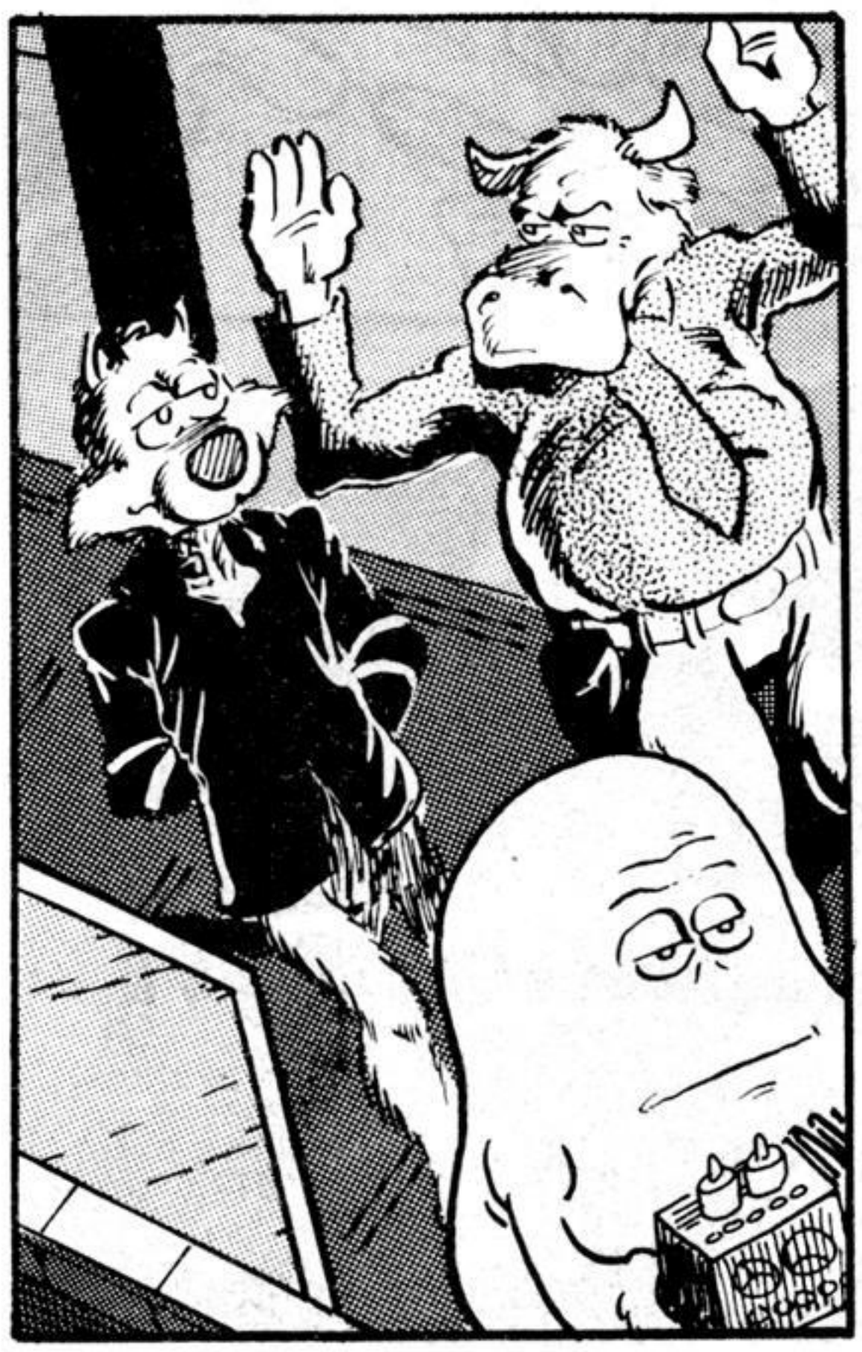

YOU SEE, THE GEEX NEVER INVENTED RECREATION... THEY'VE BECOME KIND OF... ADDICTED TO OUR POPULAR CULTURE.
WE ENJOY GARFIELD.
MIAMI VICE IS ALSO VERY GOOD.
BOY, THESE GUYS ARE STARVED FOR ENTERTAINMENT!


THEY COULD'VE WASTED DECADES ON EARTH, AS LONG AS THEY WERE LEFT ALONE. EVERYBODY IN TOWN WAS WILLING TO COOPERATE, BUT YOU HAD TO MAKE TROUBLE.

BUT... BUT I WAS BLUFFING! I NEVER LEFT TOWN... NEVER MADE THAT PHONE CALL!
INDEED? WELL, THAT CERTAINLY ADDS A TOUCH OF IRONY.


SO, JUST CALL THE INVASION OFF!
THAT WOULD BE QUITE IMPOSSIBLE. BY NOW, THE MESSAGE HAS REACHED HOME, AND WE WILL HAVE CONFIRMATION OF ATTACK IN A FEW MOMENTS.

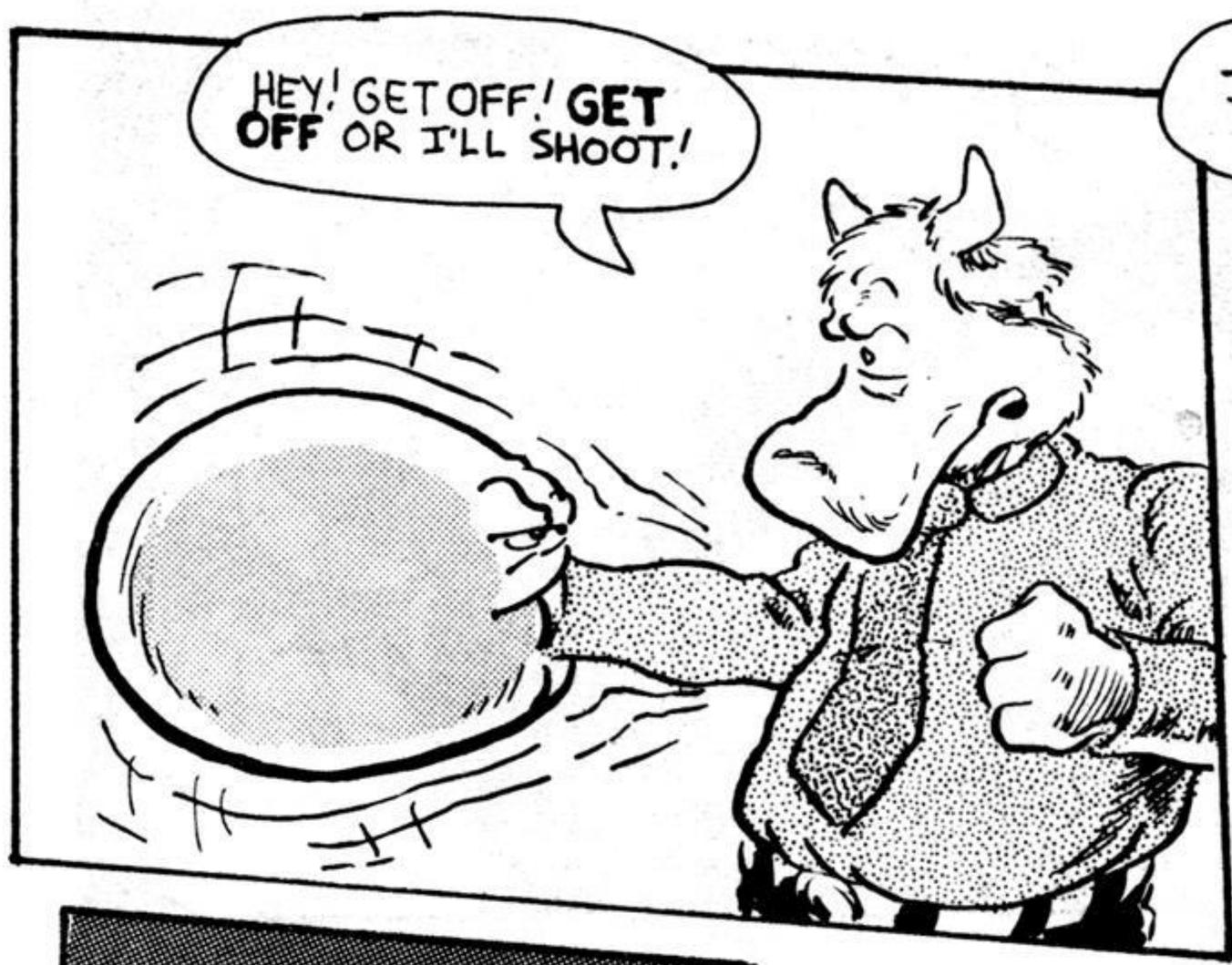

NO, OH, NO, WHAT HAVE I DONE?
SINCE THE INVASION OF YOUR PLANET WILL LIKELY RESULT IN THE EXTERMINATION OF ALL NATIVE LIFE, IT WILL BE USEFUL TO PRESERVE THE TWO OF YOU AS EXAMPLES OF THE INDIGENOUS LIFEFORMS.
YOU WILL PLEASE ACCOMPANY US TO THE CRYOGENICS CHAMBER.

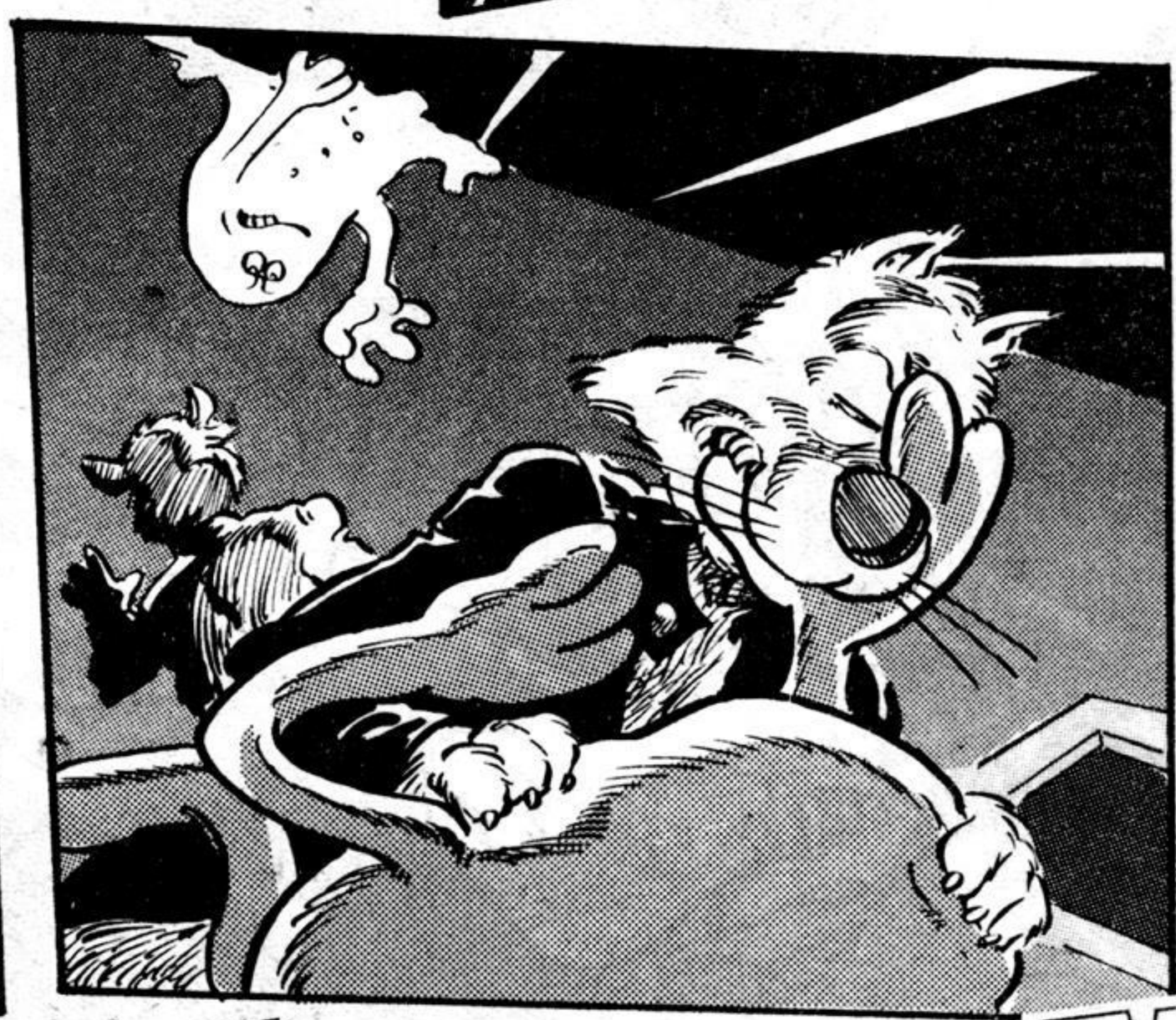


GET 'EM!
TONK!
THWUMP!
DON'T BE FOOLISH, EARTHLLYYOOOW!
SPOKT!

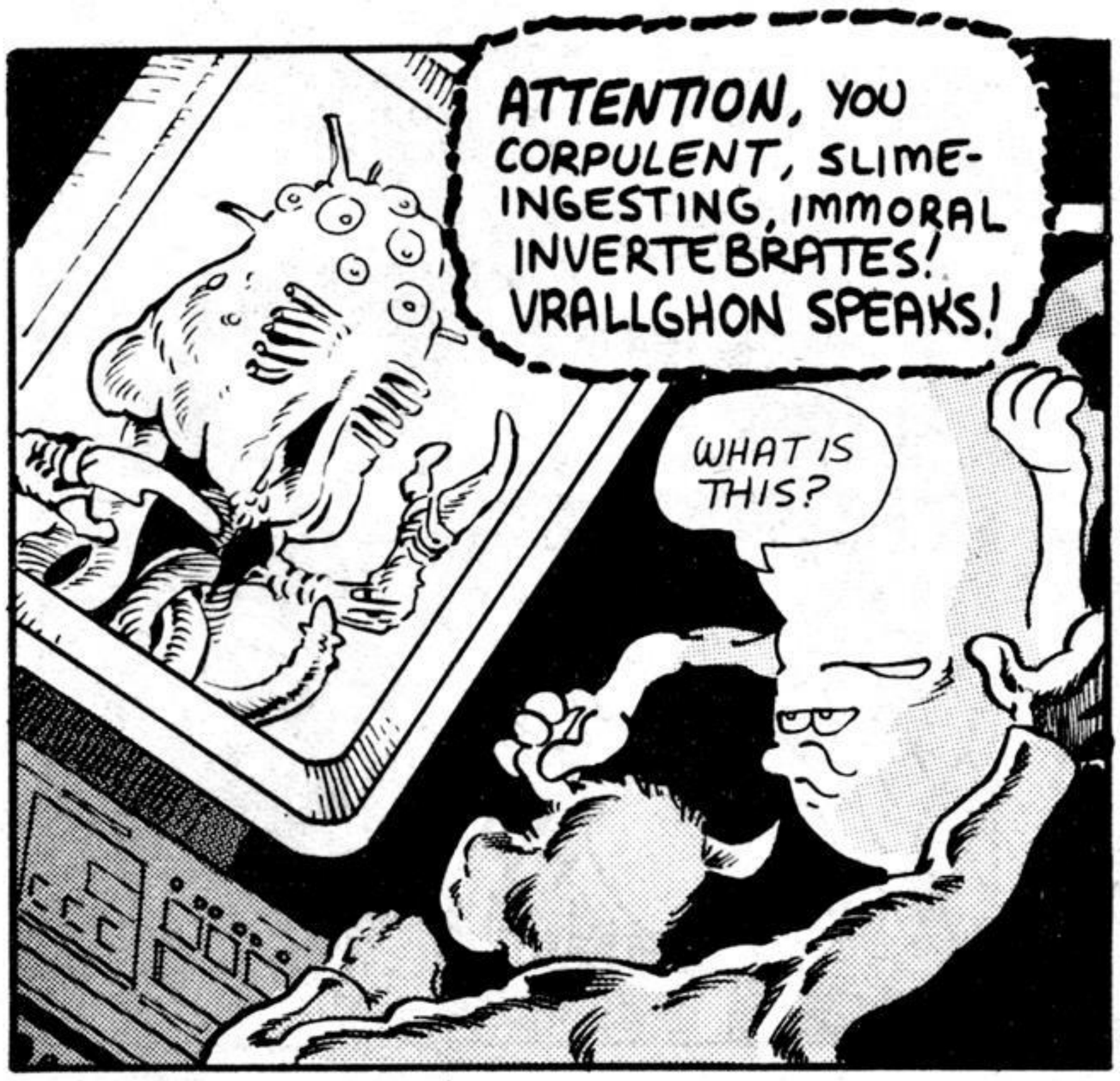
KICK HIS ASS, CAT.

GGLFFF



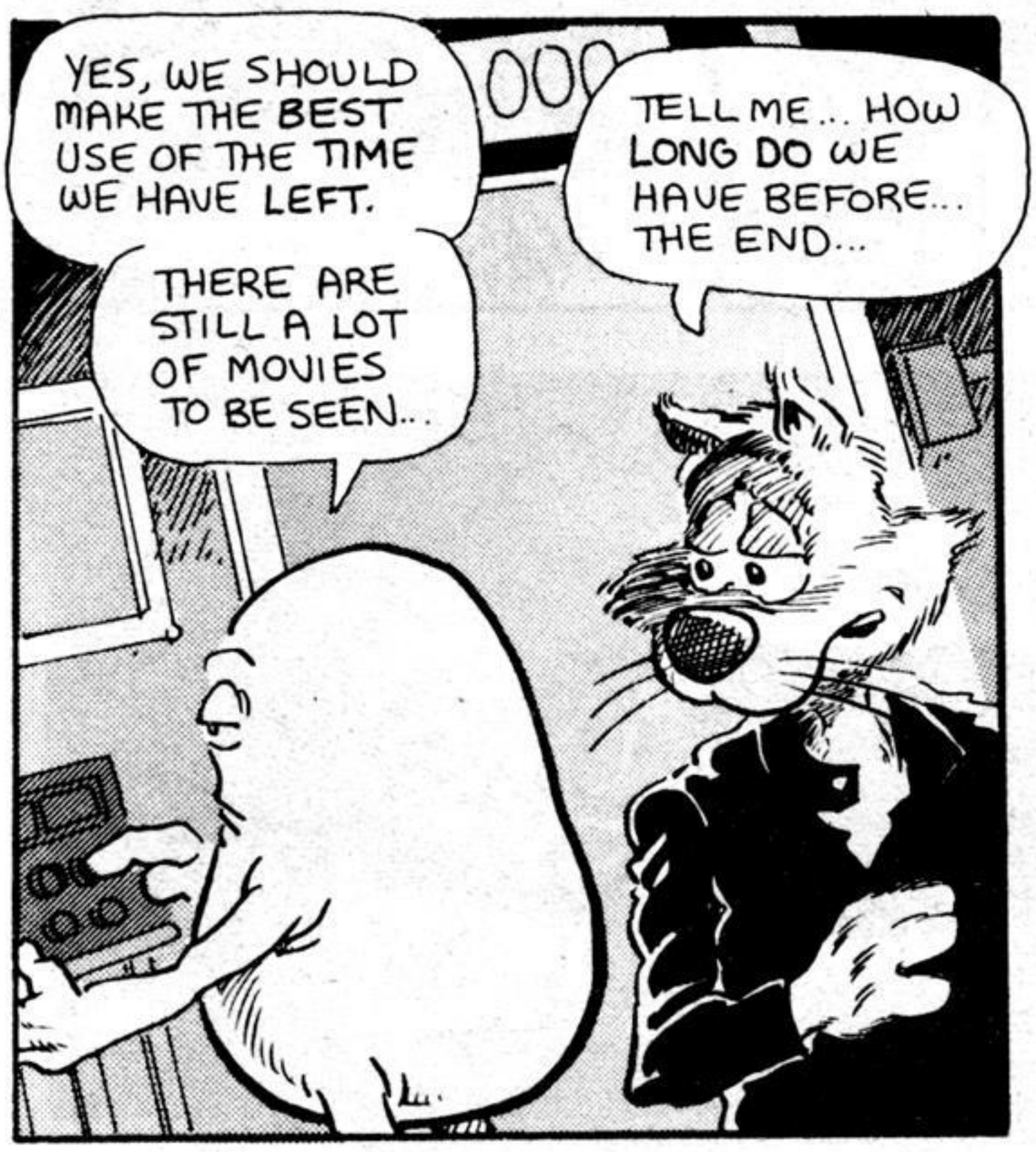


ZEE-ZEE-ZEE-ZEE-ZEE-ZEE


ATTENTION, YOU CORPULENT, SLIME-INGESTING, IMMORAL INVERTEBRATES! VRALLGHON SPEAKS!
WHAT IS THIS?

DURING YOUR ABSENCE, WE, THE SLARRN, HAVE CONQUERED YOUR MISERABLE PLANET!
NONETHELESS, WE ACCEPT YOUR KIND INVITATION AND WILL PROCEED IMMEDIATELLY TO EARTH TO RAIN DEATH AND DESTRUCTION UPON YOU.

THAT WASN'T EXACTLY BY THE BOOKS, WAS IT?
IT CERTAINLY TOOK ME BY SURPRISE.
AT THIS TIME, FURTHER HOSTILITIES WOULD SEEM POINTLESS.
THEY'RE RIGHT, IT'S OVER... WE'RE DOOMED.


YES, WE SHOULD MAKE THE BEST USE OF THE TIME WE HAVE LEFT.
THERE ARE STILL A LOT OF MOVIES TO BE SEEN...
TELL ME... HOW LONG DO WE HAVE BEFORE... THE END...

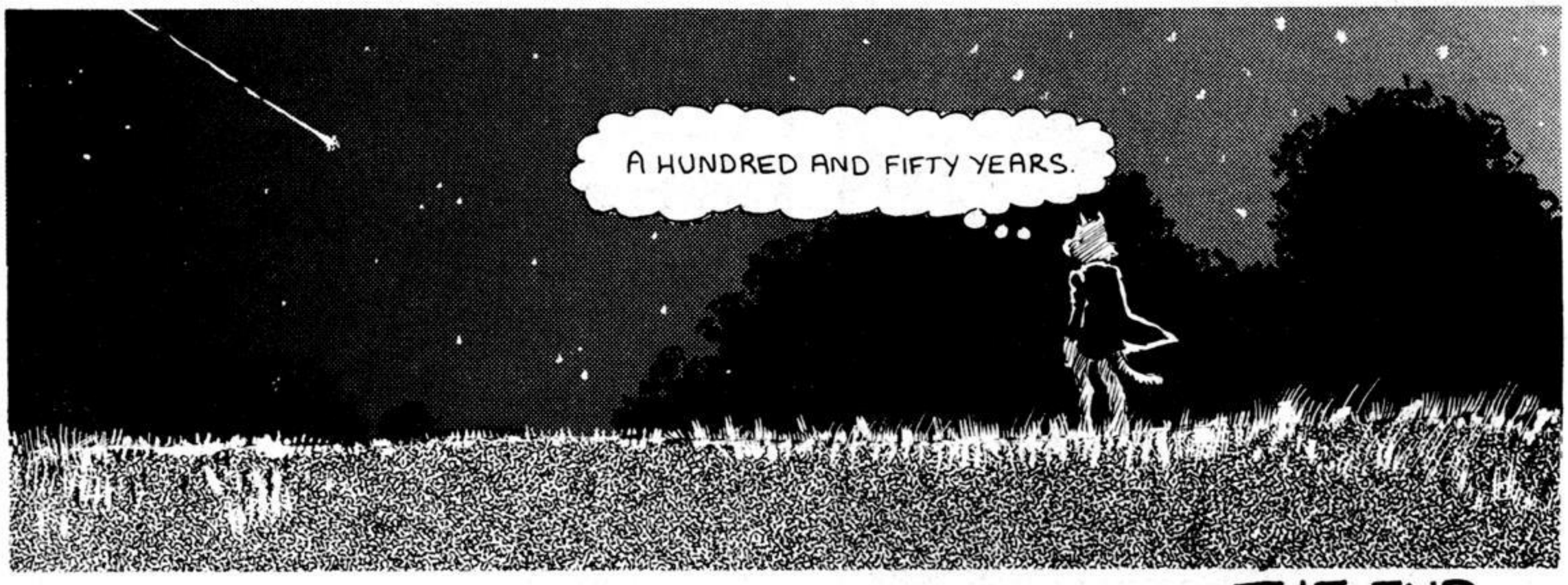
HMM, LET ME SEE. I WOULD ESTIMATE ABOUT ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY OF YOUR EARTH YEARS. THAT IS, IF THE SLARRN LEAVE RIGHT AWAY.
IS HE KIDDING?
WWHHRRRR
KLIK

THE SLARRN ARE A PRIMITIVE PEOPLE... THEY HAVE NOT YET DEVELOPED WARP DRIVE FOR THEIR WARSHIPS.
A HUNNERD AND FIFTY YEARS! YIPPEE! HOO-RAY!

WE SHALL REMAIN HERE IN WAKO... AND YOU ARE FREE TO GO, SO LONG AS YOU KEEP OUR SECRET.
YOU'RE NOT WORRIED I'LL EXPOSE YOU TO THE WORLD?

I SUPPOSE YOU COULD IF YOU WANTED TO...
I'M SURE YOUR FELLOW EARTHLINGS WOULD BE PLEASED TO KNOW THAT YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EVENTUAL AND INEVITABLE TOTAL OBLITERATION OF THEIR PLANET.

...IT'S A GOOD POINT...
POLICE

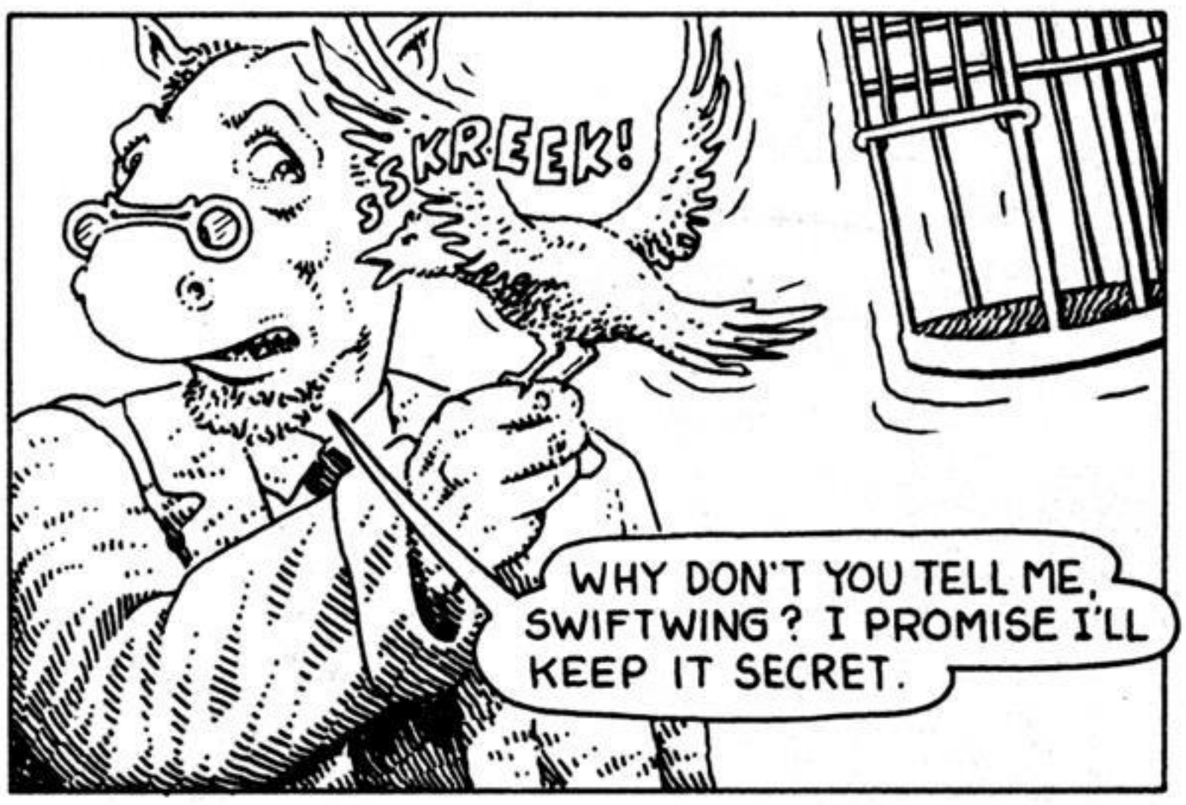

A HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS.

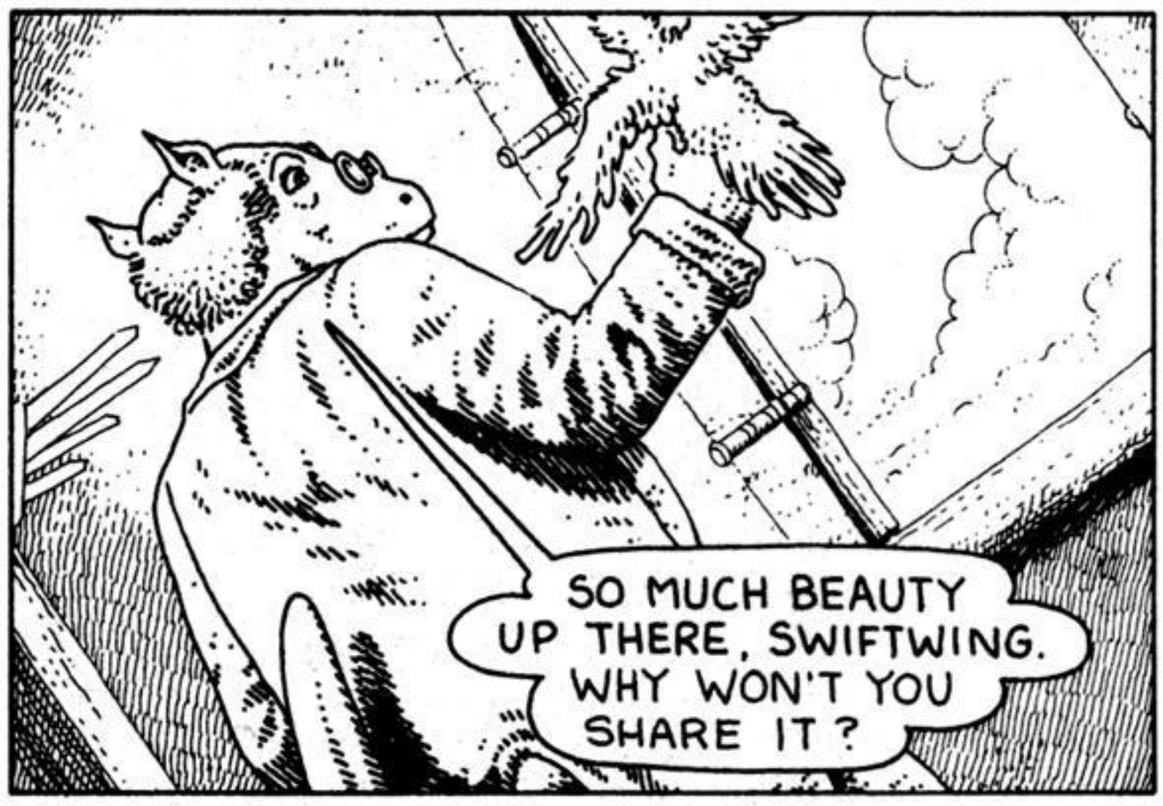
THE END

Artwork © 1986 respective creators

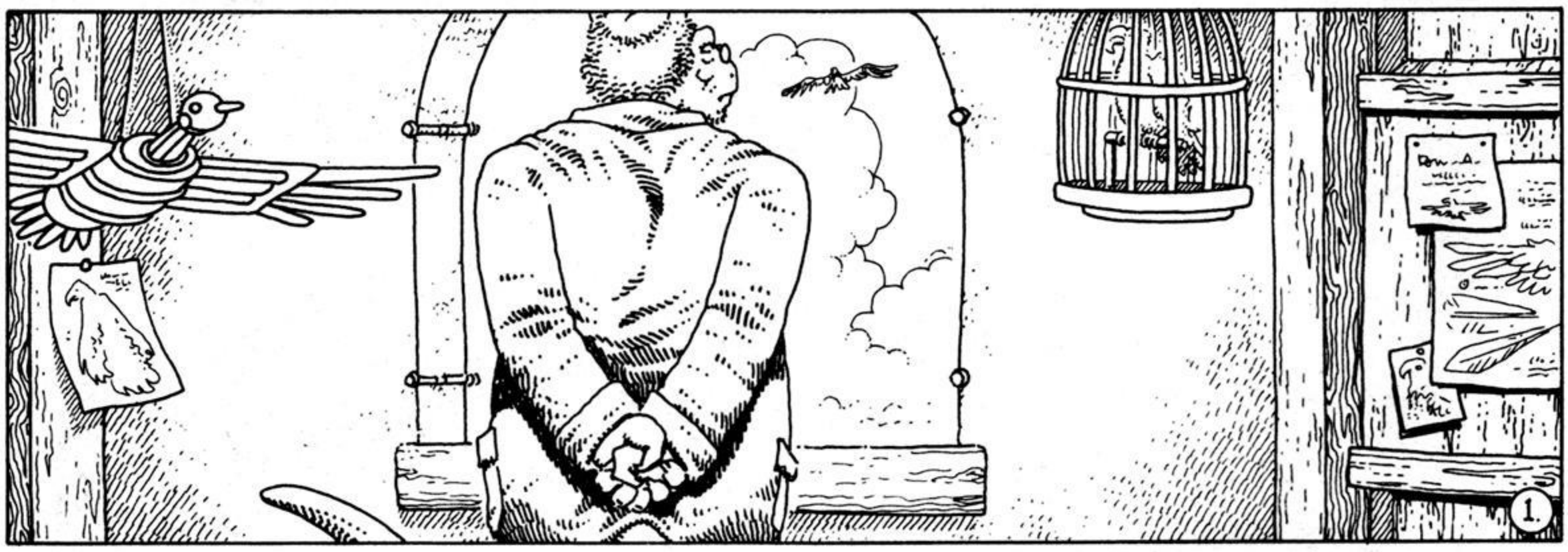
I WAS SO CLOSE, I KNOW IT. I FINALLY FIGURE IT OUT, BUT IT STILL ELUDES ME.

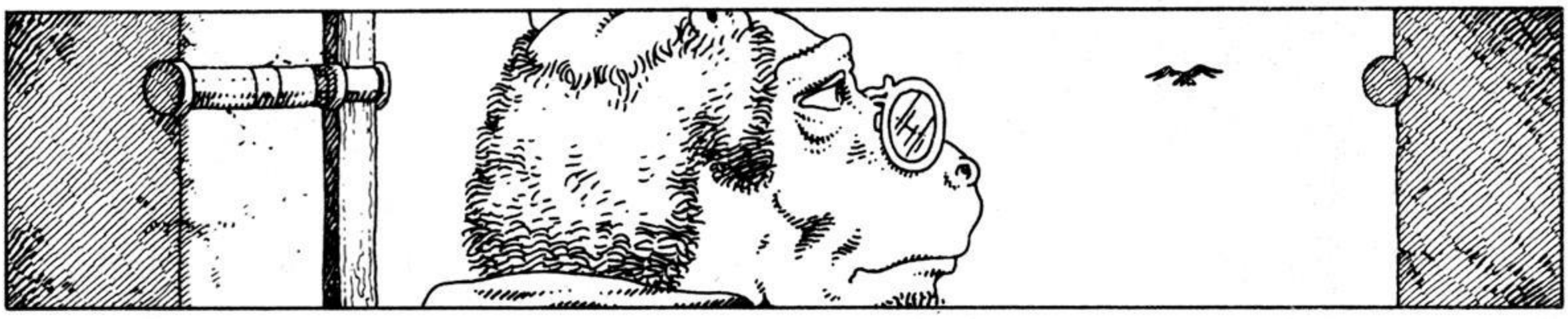
SKREEK!
COME HERE, SWIFTWING. ARE YOU LAUGHING AT ME? IT'S NOT FUNNY, YOU KNOW.


SSKREEK!
WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME, SWIFTWING? I PROMISE I'LL KEEP IT SECRET.


SO MUCH BEAUTY UP THERE, SWIFTWING. WHY WON'T YOU SHARE IT?

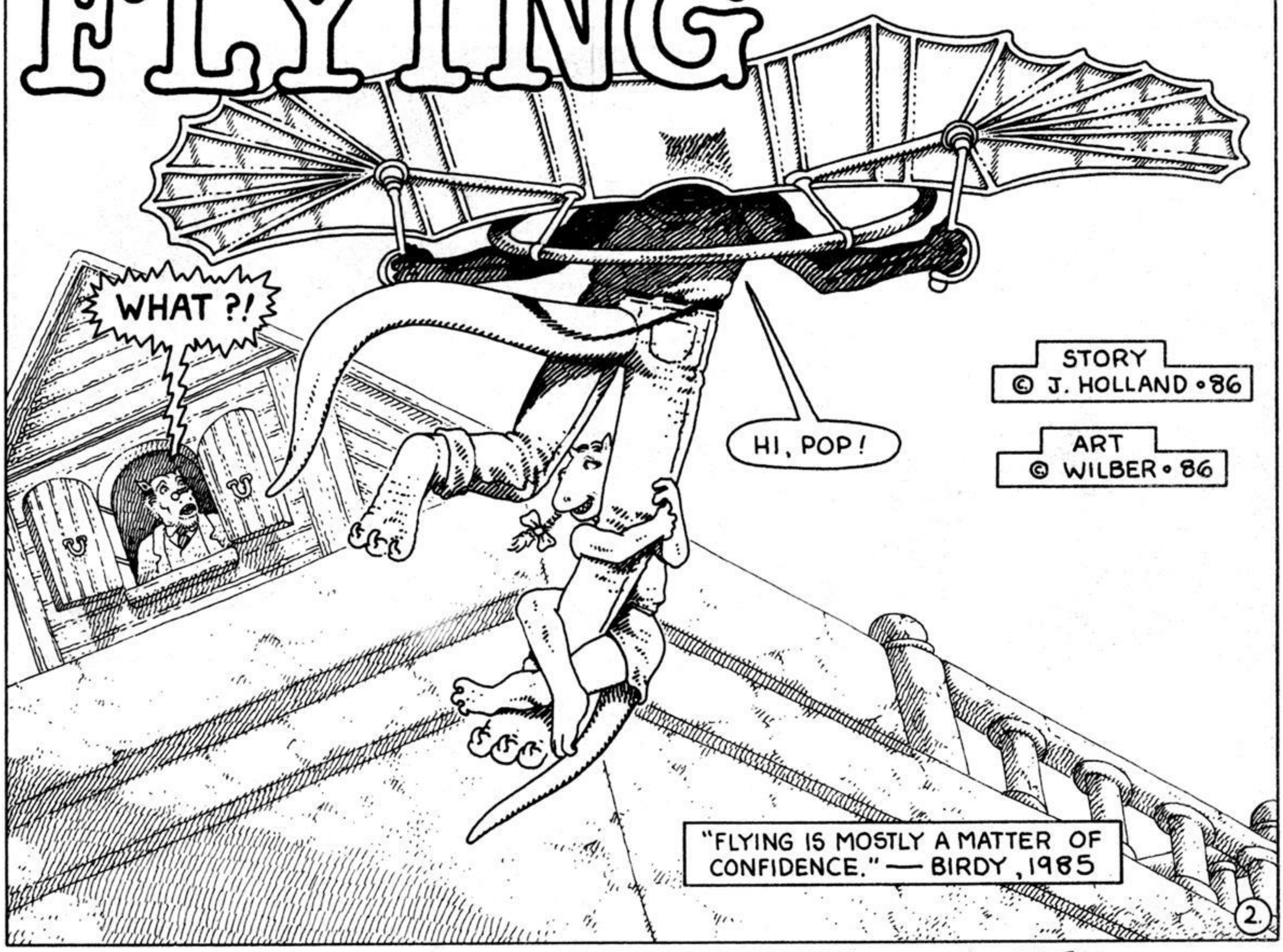
FREE.
JUST LIKE I PROMISED. EVEN IF YOU DIDN'T KEEP YOUR SIDE OF THE DEAL.


1.



FLYING

CHARACTER CO-CREATOR : SAM KIETH



STORY
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ART
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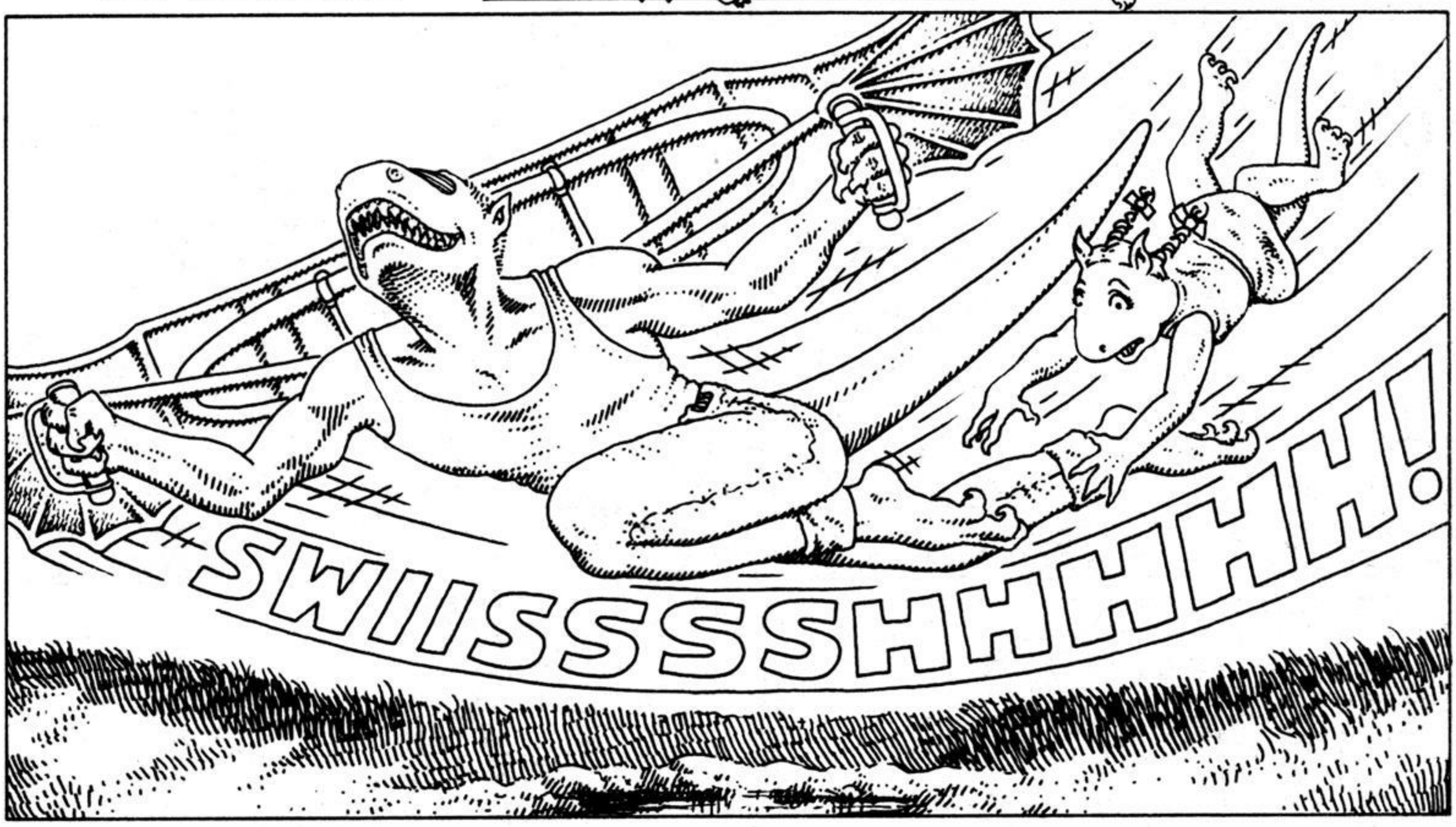
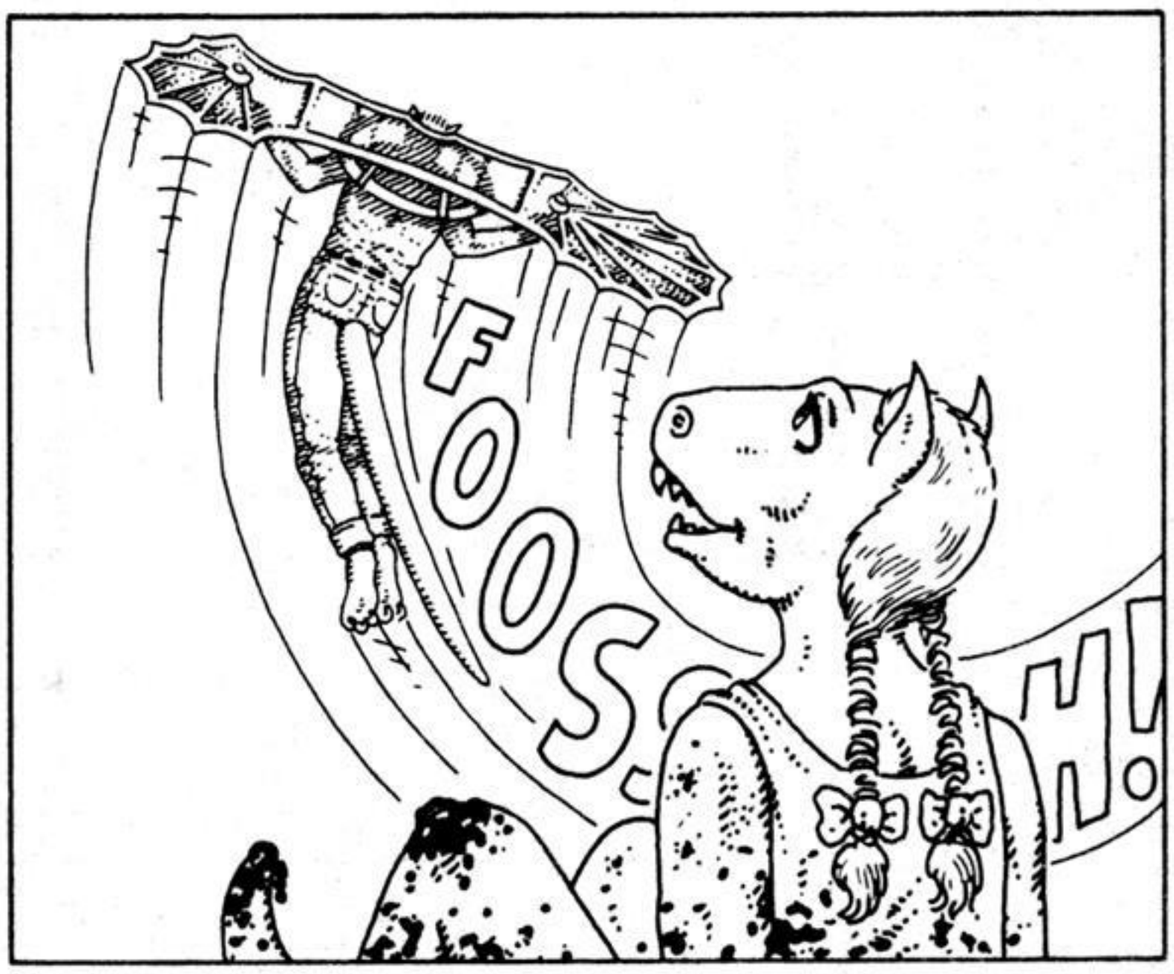
"FLYING IS MOSTLY A MATTER OF CONFIDENCE." — BIRDY, 1985

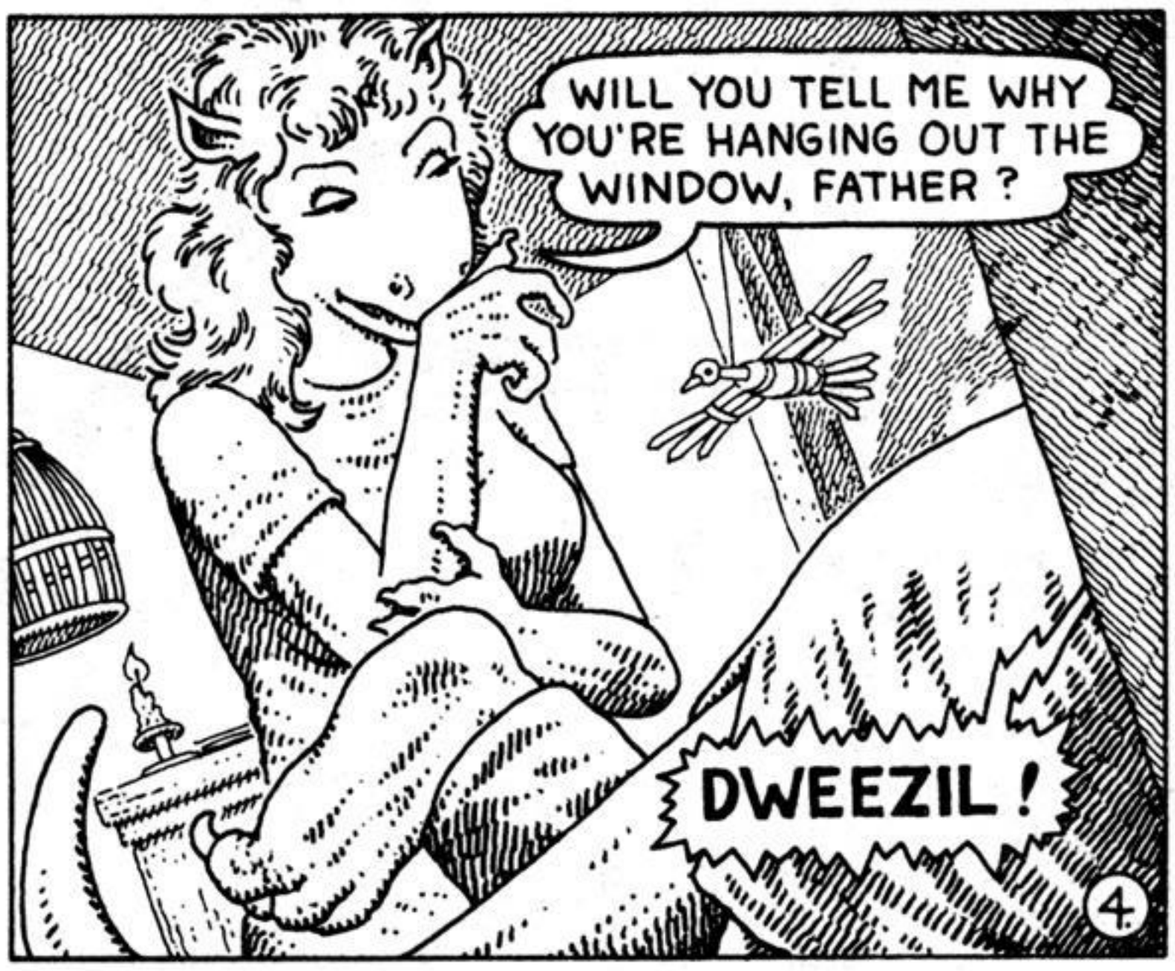
DWEEZIL!
SSSWWWHHHH
H
DWEEZIL!
LAND THAT THING AT ONCE!
HI, DADDY!
HI, DADDY!
DID YOU HEAR ME, DWEEZIL? PUT THAT THING DOWN AT ONCE!
CAN'T HEAR YOU, POP! WIND IN MY EARS!
HI, DADDY!
HI, DADDY!
FFZZZZZZZZ
OH, NO.


SWIISSSSHHHH!

YEAAAAA!
SPLOP!

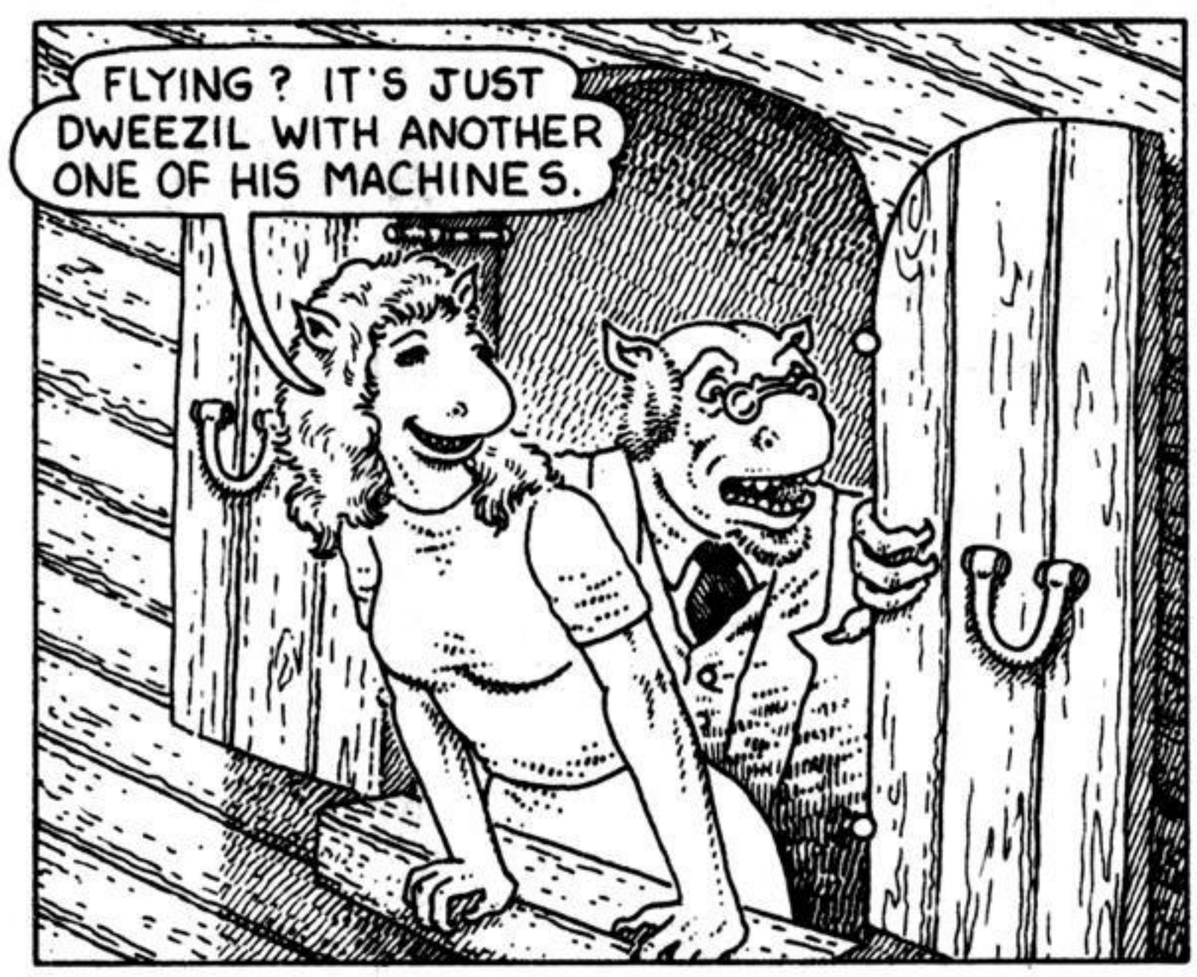

FOOSH!

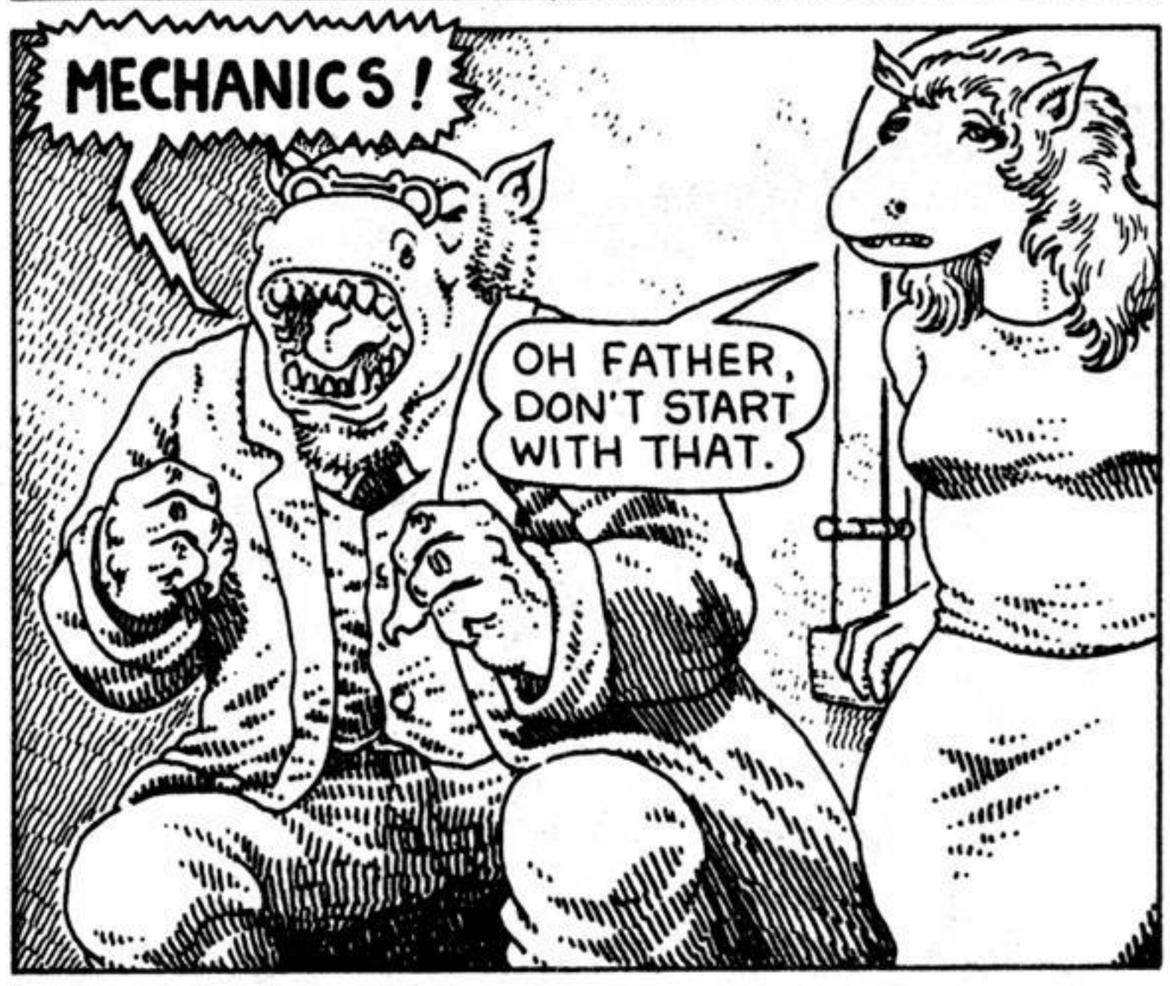
DWEEZIL, LAND AT ONCE! DO YOU HEAR ME?!
WHAT IS GOING ON IN HERE?


WILL YOU TELL ME WHY YOU'RE HANGING OUT THE WINDOW, FATHER?
DWEEZIL!

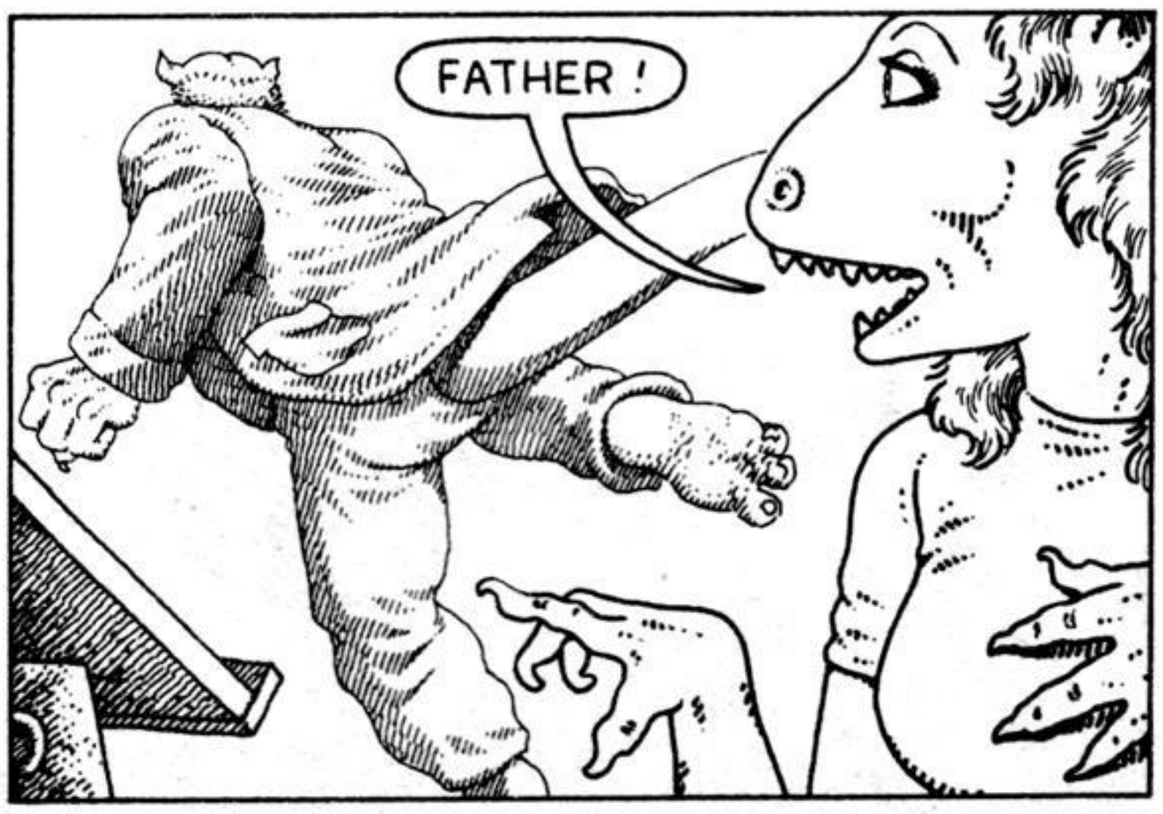
GET IN HERE BEFORE YOU BREAK YOUR FOOL NECK!
BUT DON'T YOU SEE HIM?

DWEEZIL IS FLYING!
WHAT?!

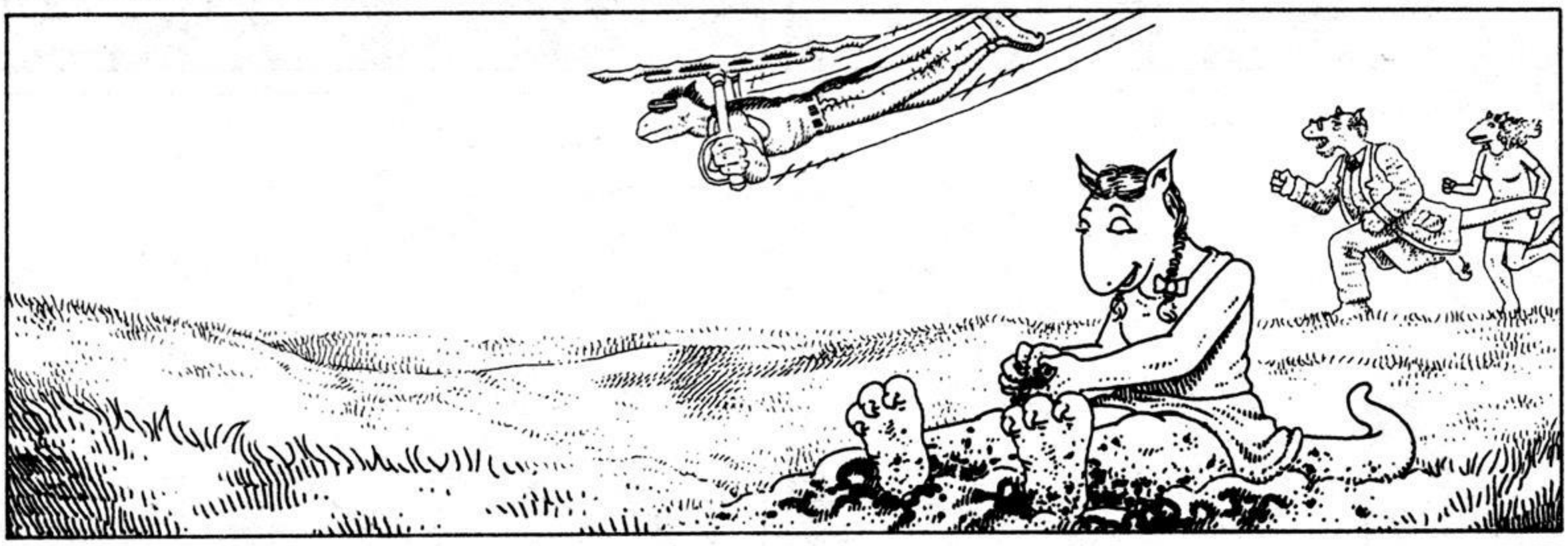

FLYING? IT'S JUST DWEEZIL WITH ANOTHER ONE OF HIS MACHINES.

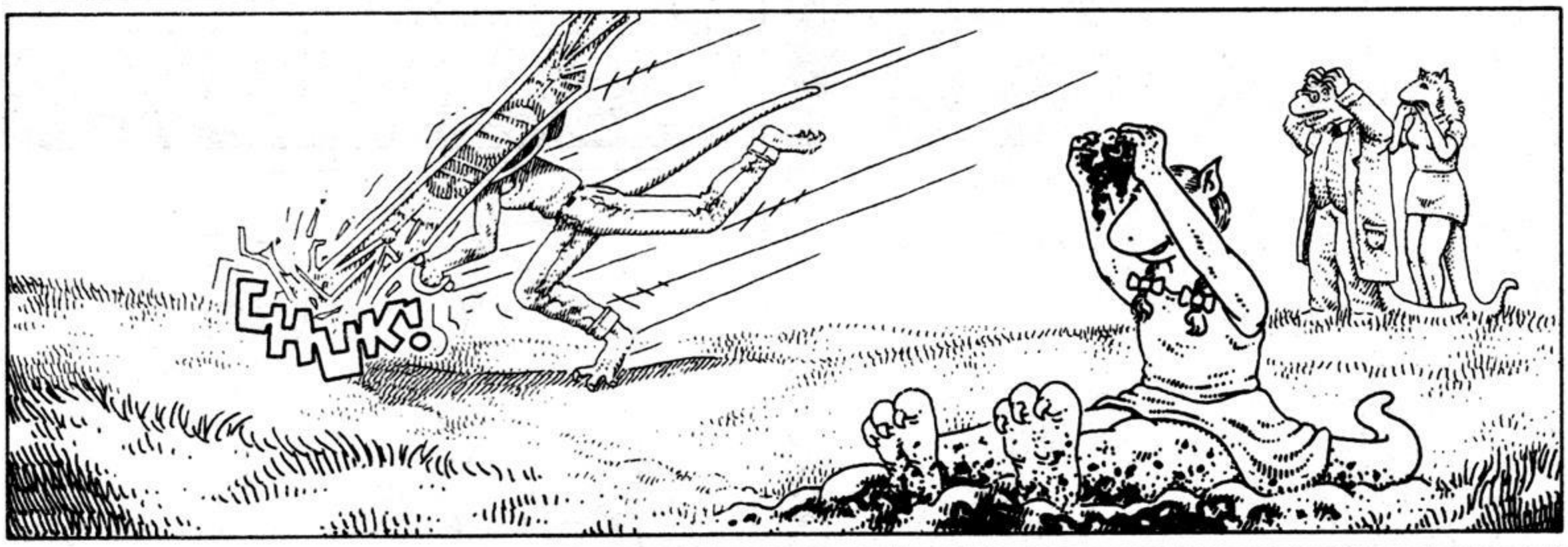

MECHANICS!
OH FATHER, DON'T START WITH THAT.

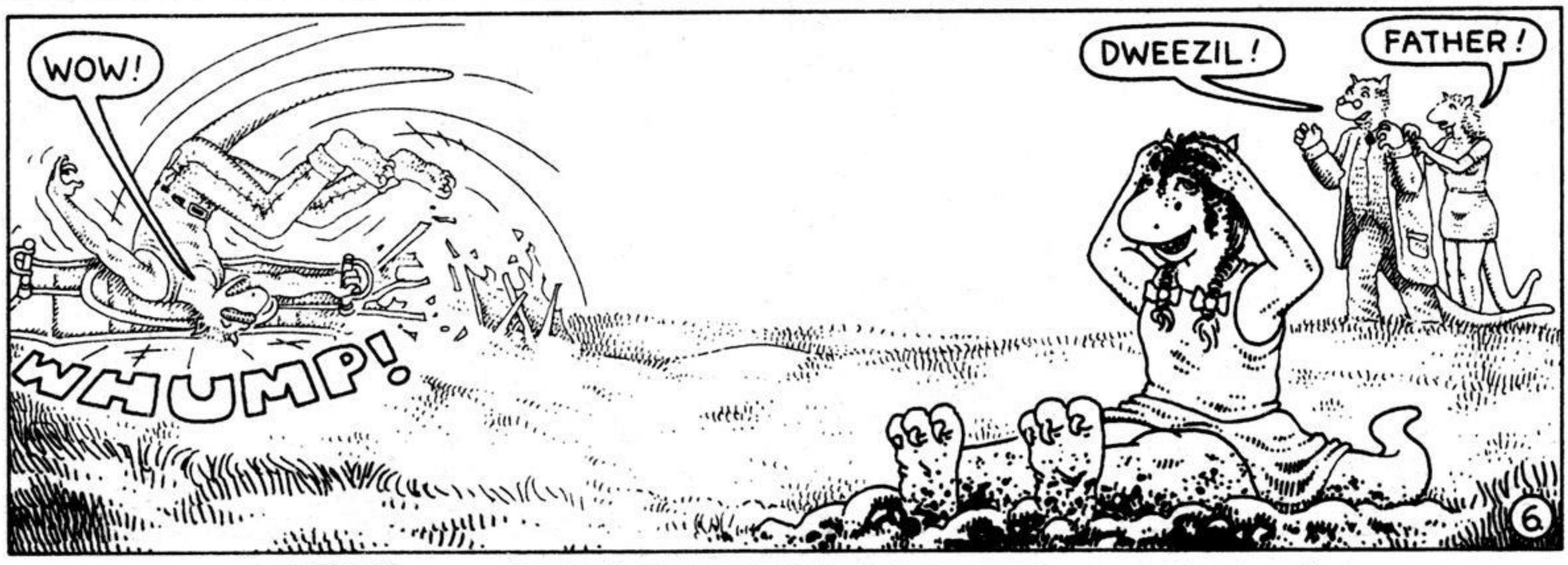
I'M SURPRISED THAT BOY HASN'T TRIED TO BUILD A MECHANICAL DRAGON YET. ALWAYS MACHINES! YOU'D THINK NATURE WOULD BE ENOUGH FOR HIM.


FATHER !

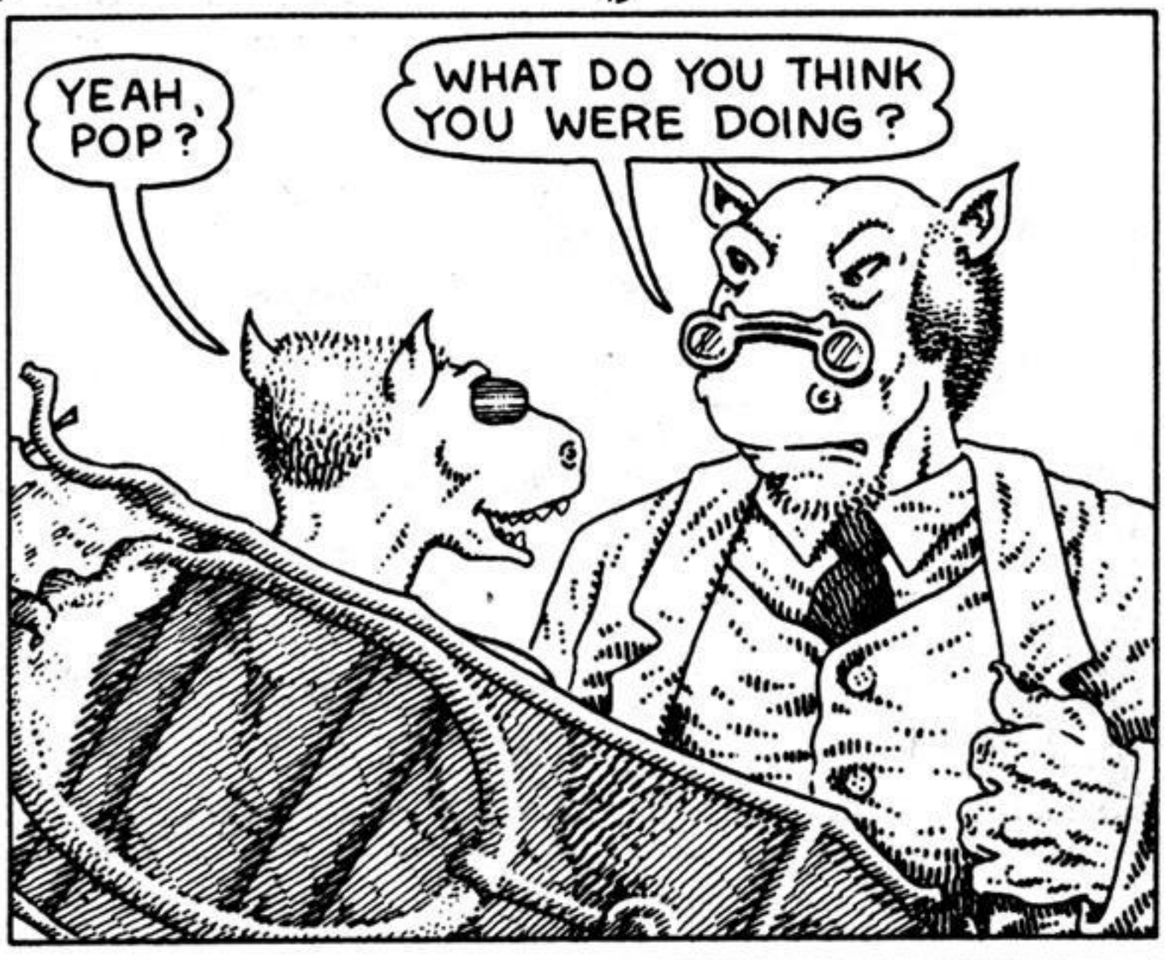
DWEEZIL ! LAND THAT THING AT ONCE !
FATHER !

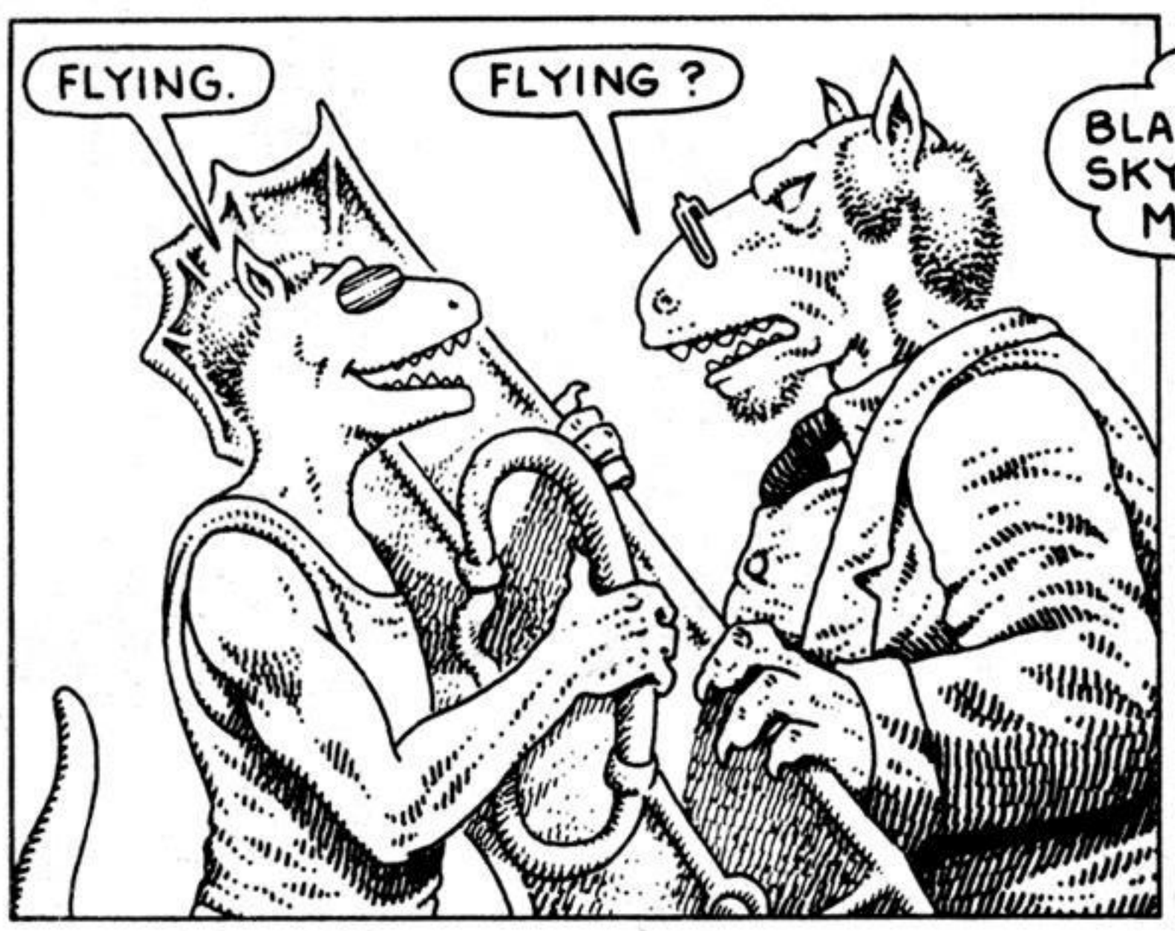



CHUK!


WOW!
WHUMP!
DWEEZIL !
FATHER !

I THINK I MIGHT BE ABLE TO SALVAGE IT IT'S-
DWEEZIL!

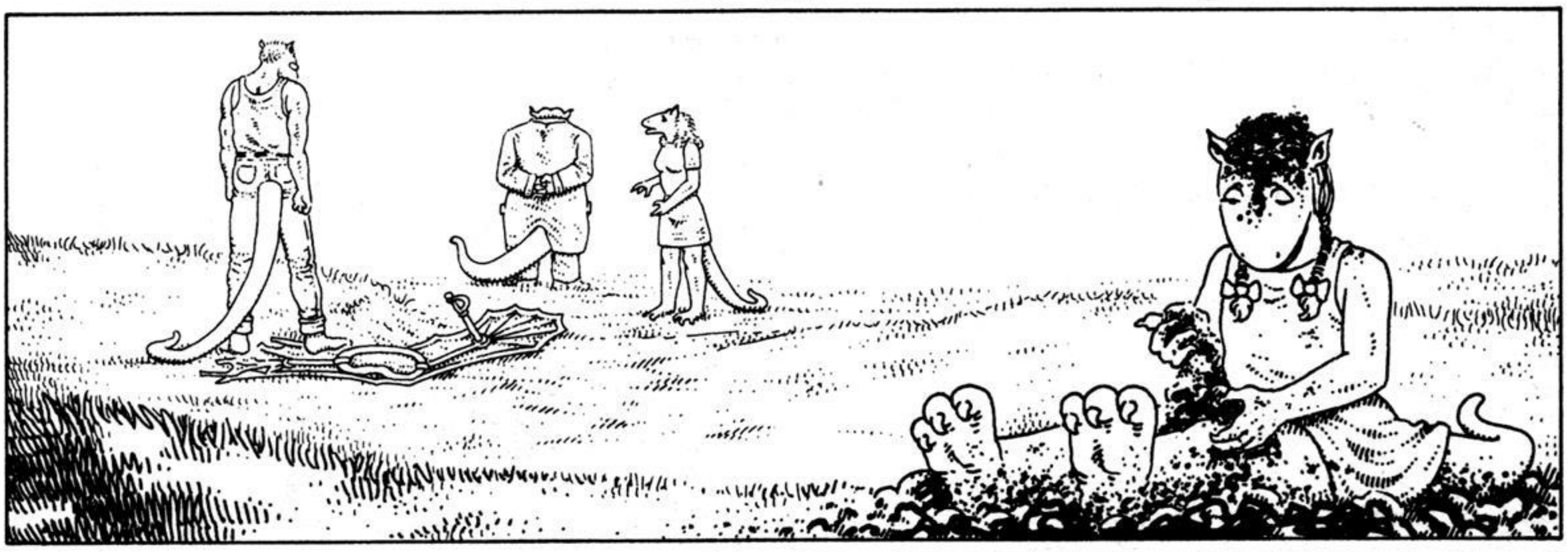

YEAH, POP?
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU WERE DOING?

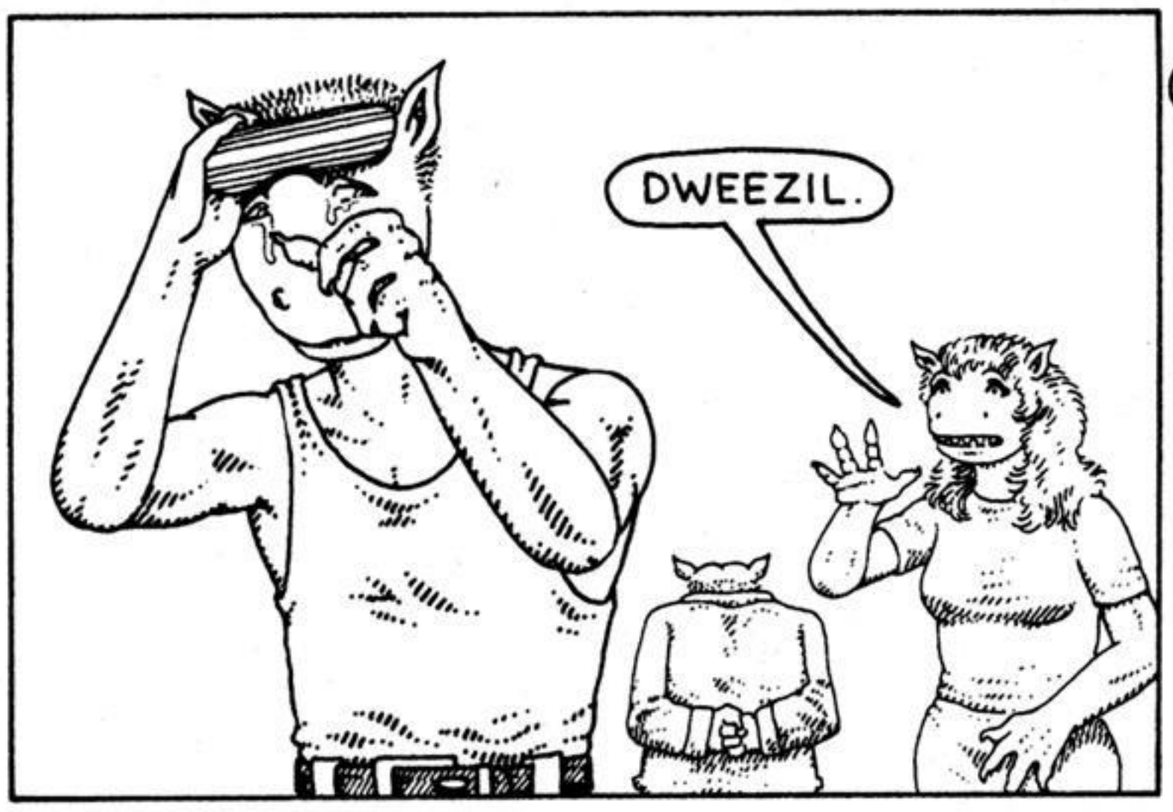

FLYING.
FLYING?

DO NOT BLASPHEME THE SKY WITH YOUR MECHANICS!
KLACK!

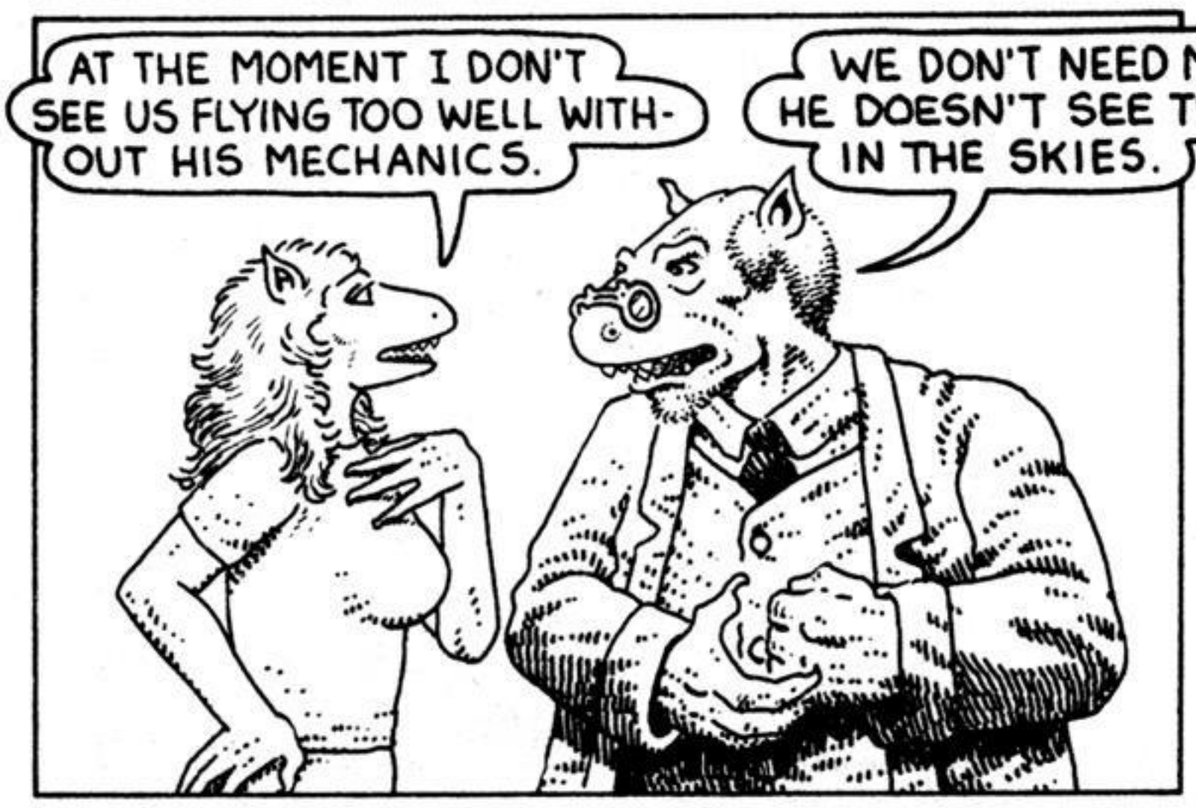
I THOUGHT THIS WAS WHAT YOU WANTED. IT'S YOUR DREAM TO FLY.

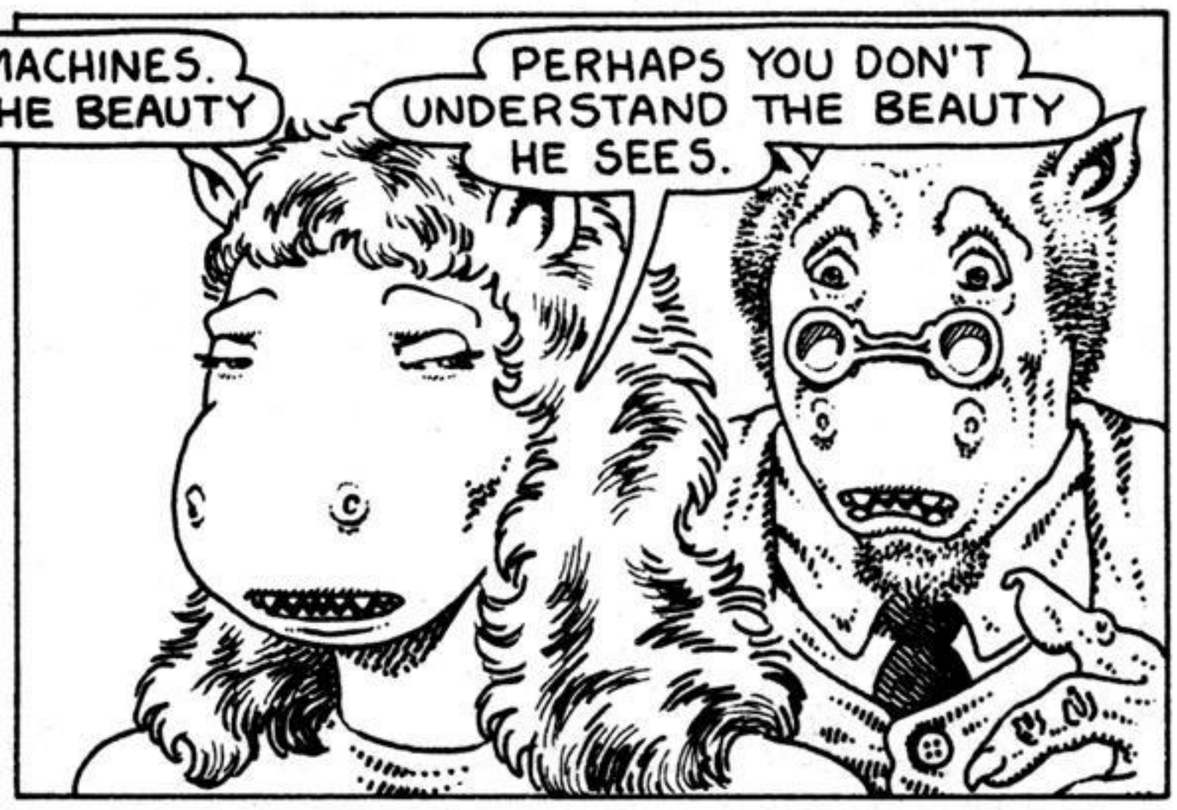
NOT LIKE THIS.

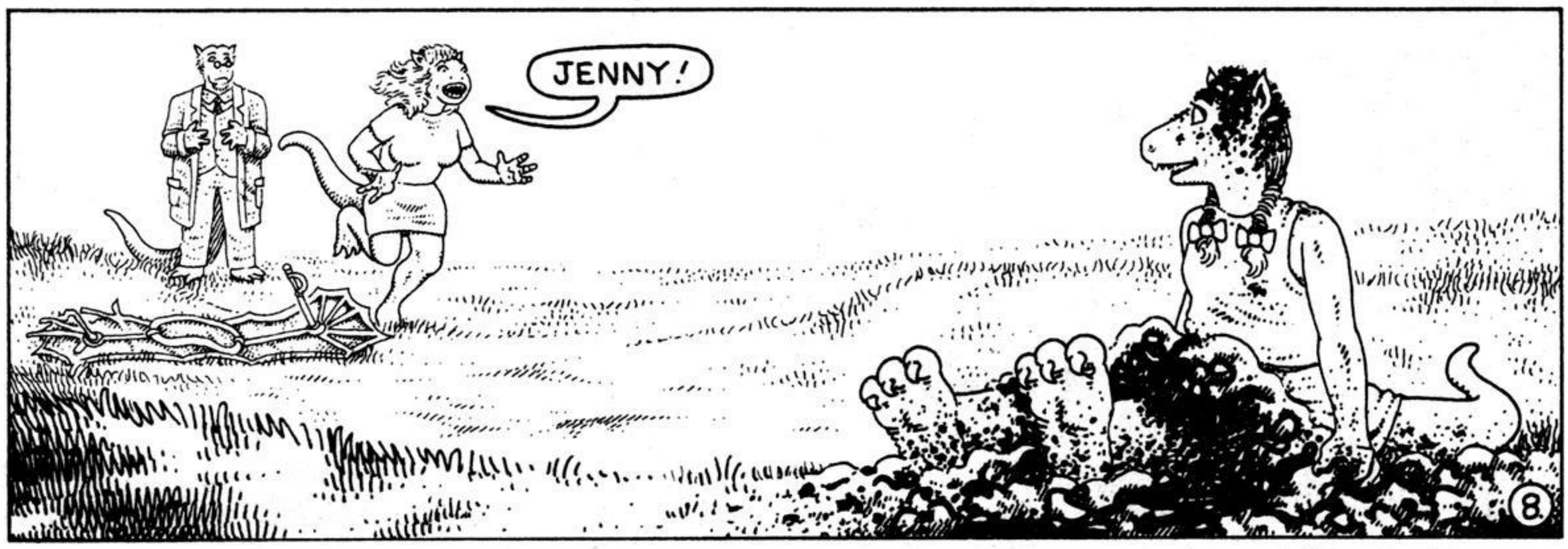


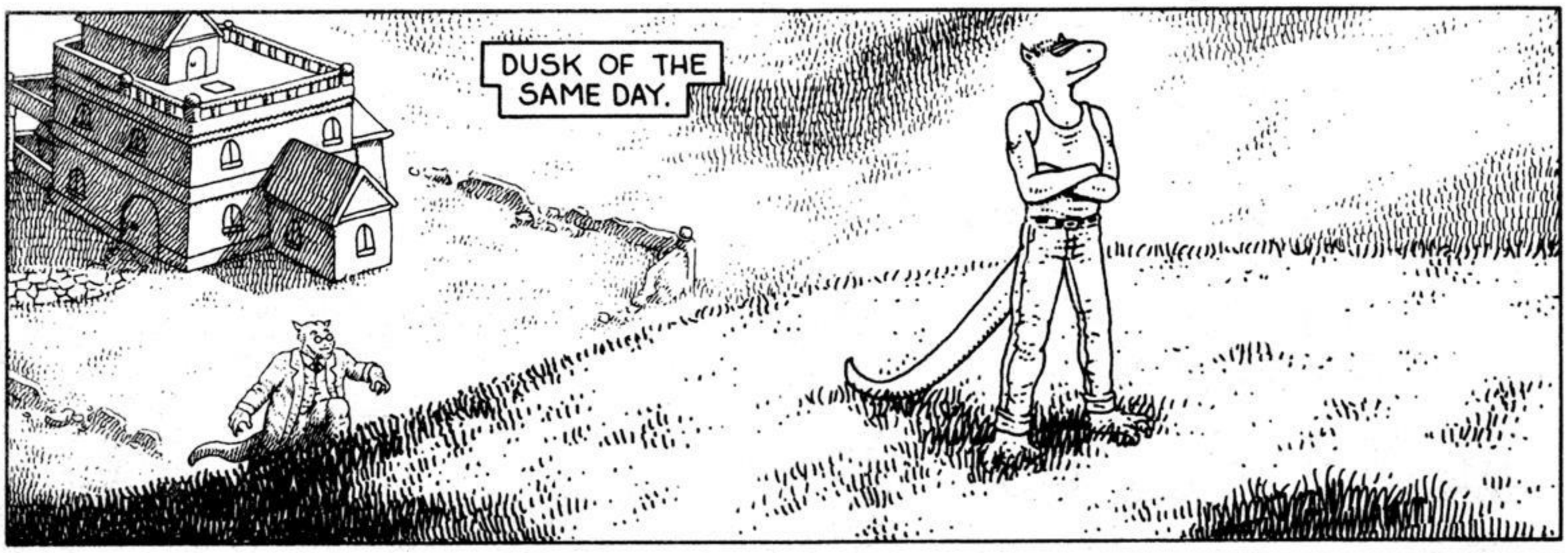

DWEEZIL.

FATHER.
I'M SORRY. BUT HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND. WE ARE DESCENDED FROM THE DRAGON. WE CAN FLY ON OUR OWN.

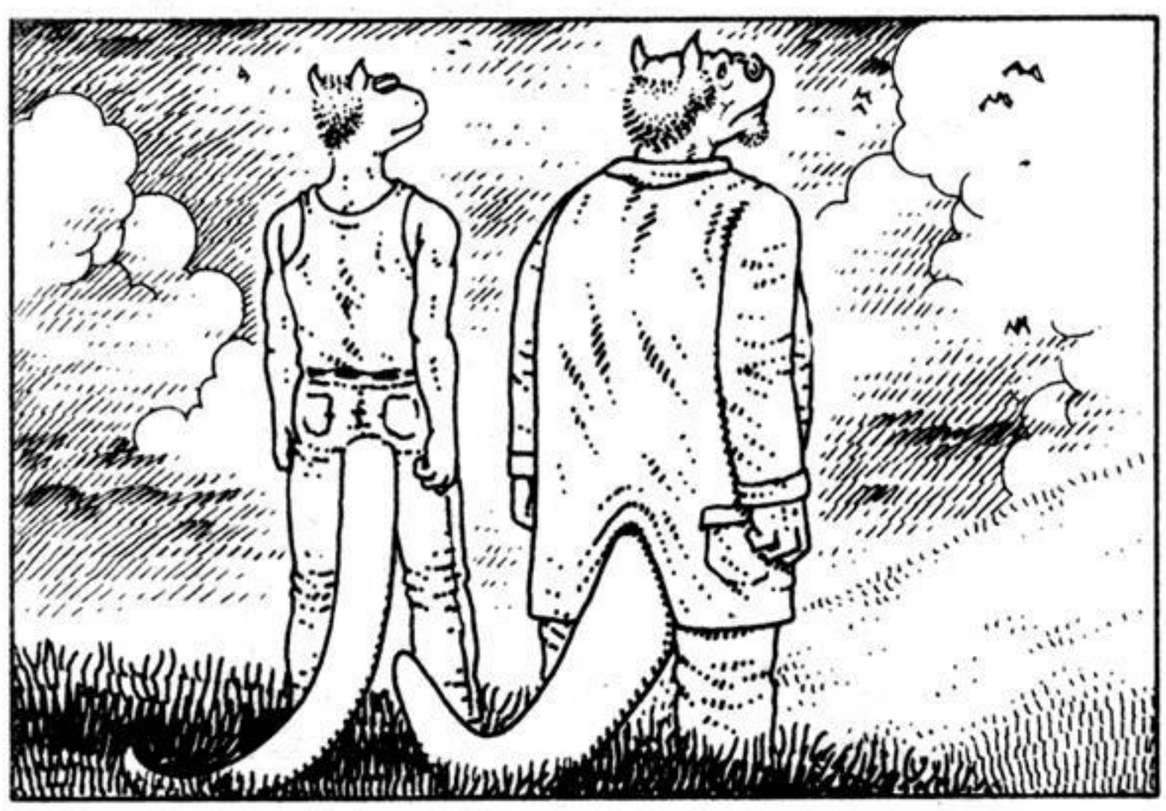

AT THE MOMENT I DON'T SEE US FLYING TOO WELL WITHOUT HIS MECHANICS.
WE DON'T NEED MACHINES. HE DOESN'T SEE THE BEAUTY IN THE SKIES.


PERHAPS YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THE BEAUTY HE SEES.


JENNY!


DUSK OF THE SAME DAY.

BEAUTIFUL, ISN'T IT?
YES.



YOUR SISTER HAS DINNER READY.

THE END.

ON SALE NOW!

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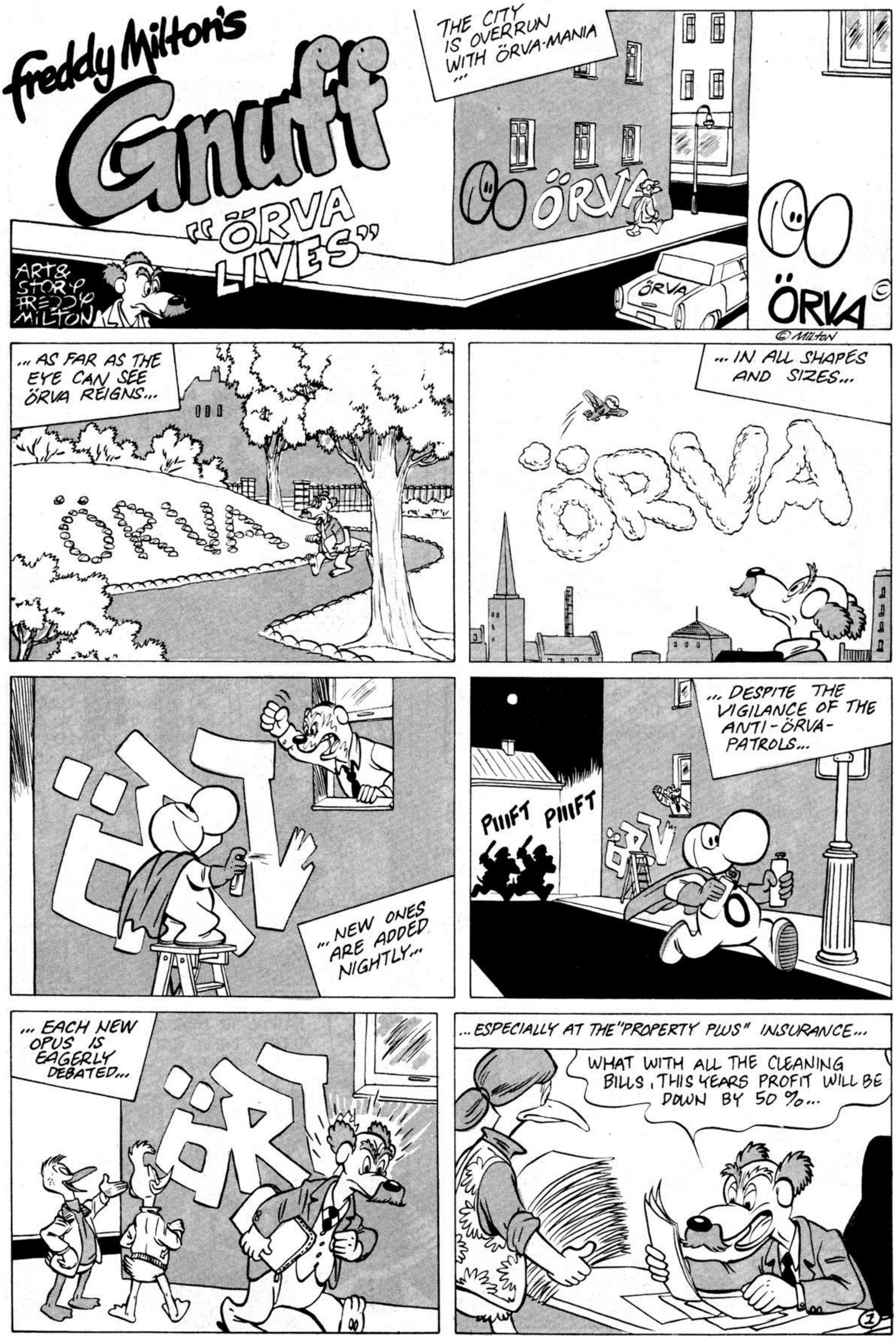
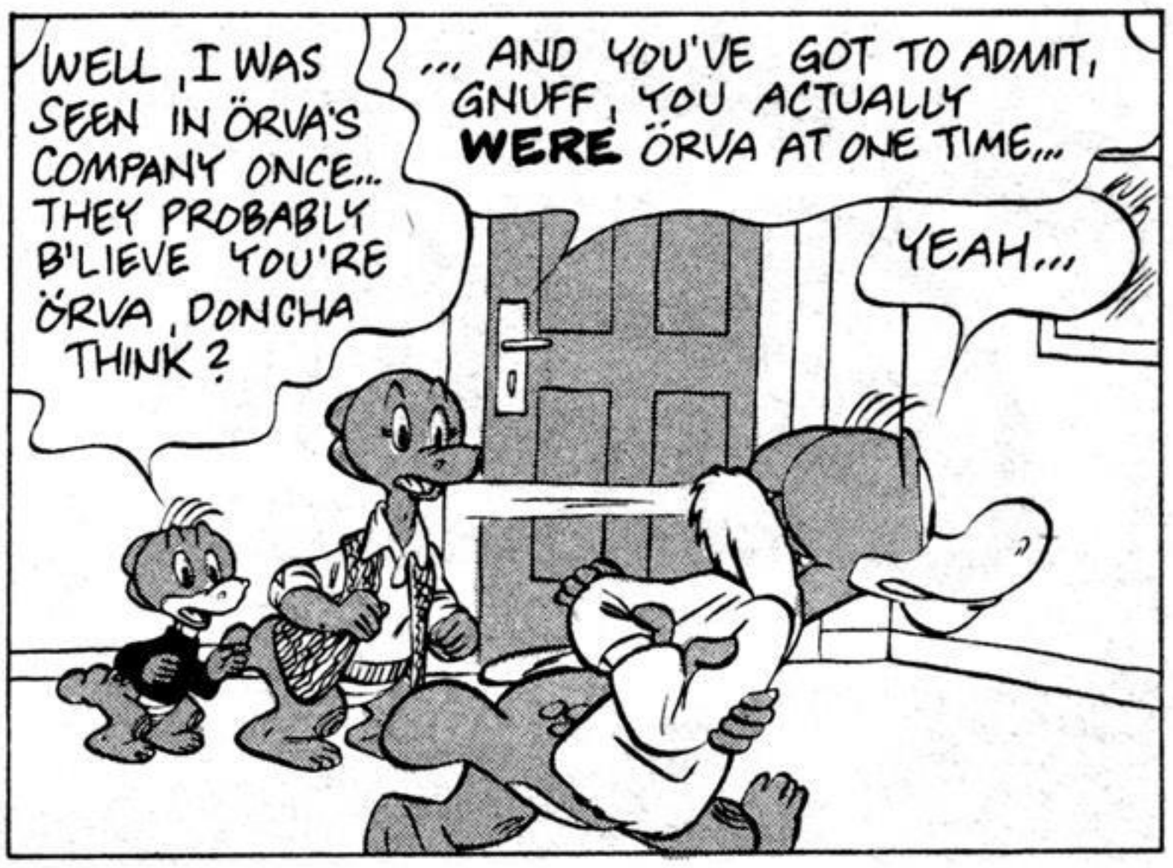
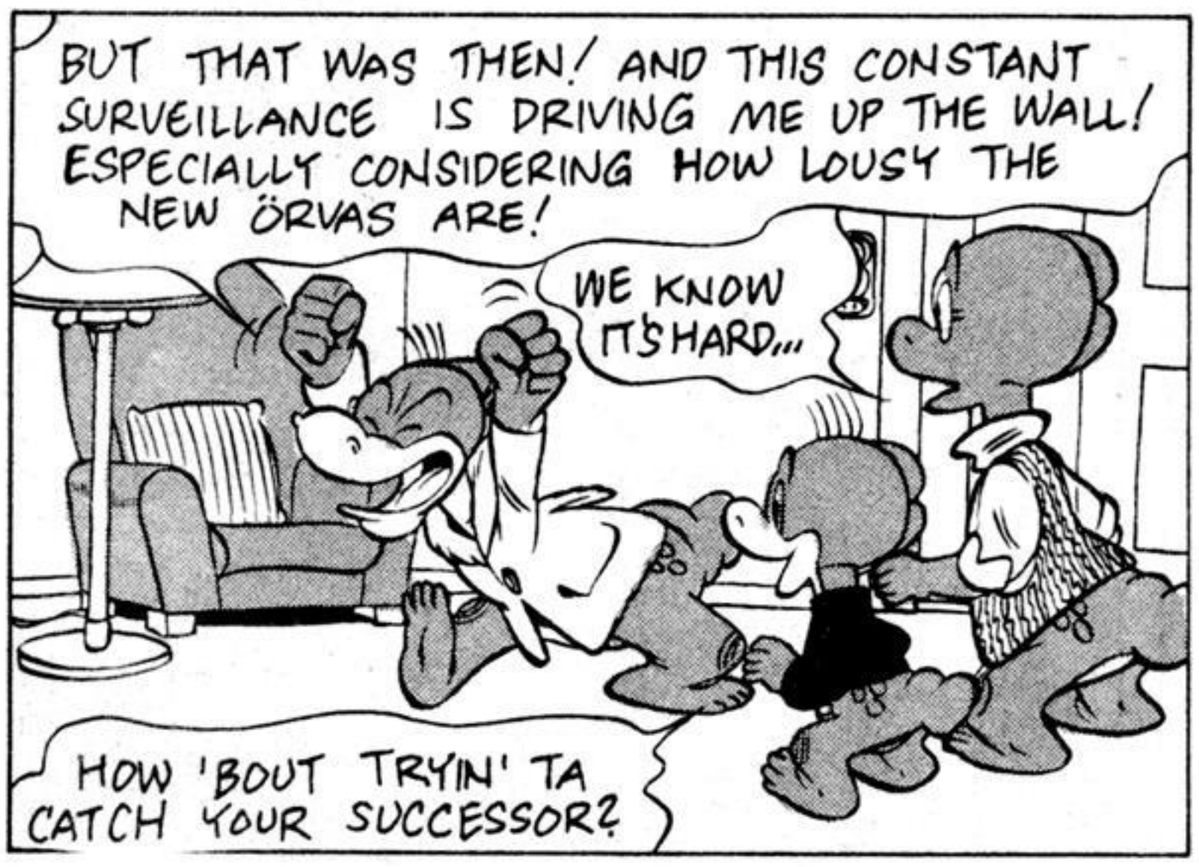
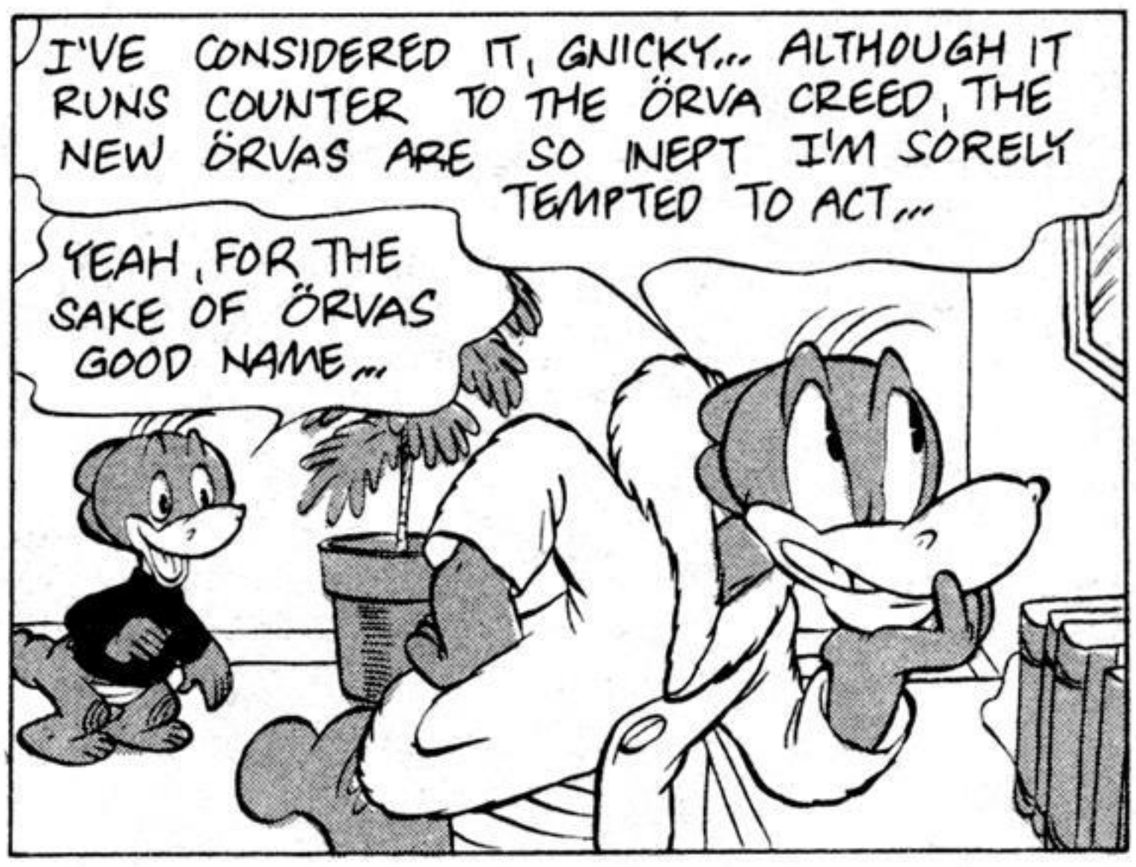
DE GRAND WAZOO!
YAWN
THE
END
-©1984 SAM KIETH-

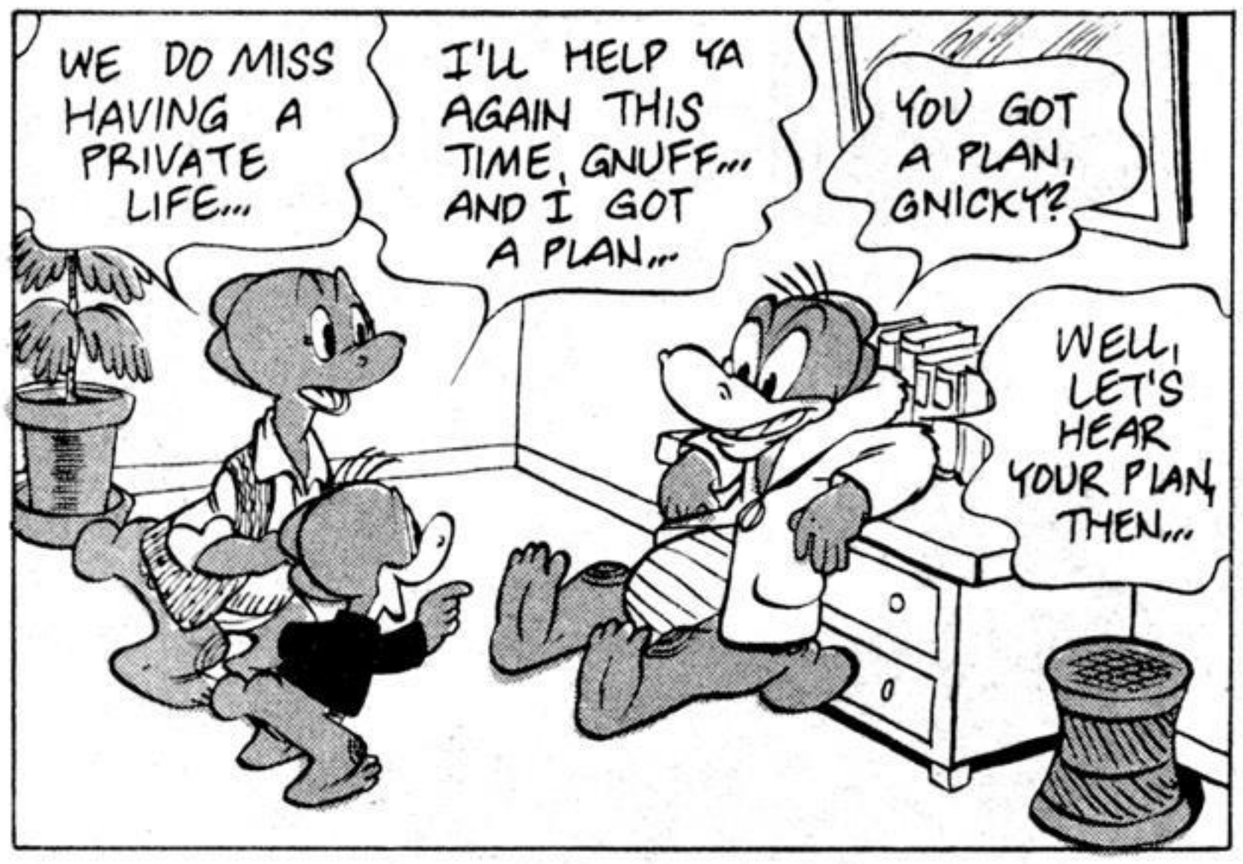

Freddy Milton's
Gnuff
"ÖRVA LIVES"
ART & STORY FREDDY MILTON
THE CITY IS OVERRUN WITH ÖRVA-MANIA ...
ÖRVA
ÖRVA
ÖRVA ©
© MILTON
... AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE ÖRVA REIGNS...
ÖRVA
... IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES...
ÖRVA
... NEW ONES ARE ADDED NIGHTLY...
PIIIFT PIIIFT
... DESPITE THE VIGILANCE OF THE ANTI-ÖRVA-PATROLS...
... EACH NEW OPUS IS EAGERLY DEBATED...
... ESPECIALLY AT THE "PROPERTY PLUS" INSURANCE...
WHAT WITH ALL THE CLEANING BILLS, THIS YEARS PROFIT WILL BE DOWN BY 50 %...
1

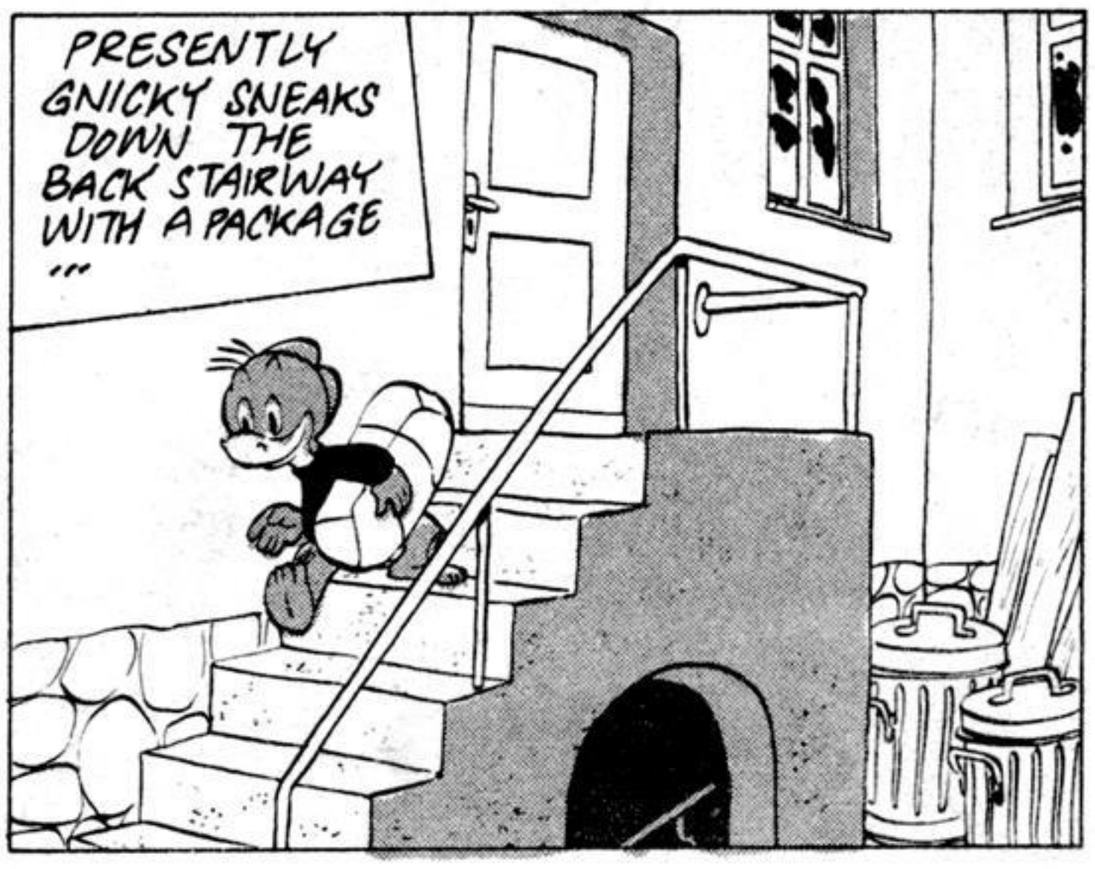
ONE EVENING AT THE GNUFFS'...
THOSE PRIVATE ANTI-ÖRVA TROOPS ARE ON MY TAIL AROUND THE CLOCK... I CAN'T STAND IT!


WELL, I WAS SEEN IN ÖRVA'S COMPANY ONCE... THEY PROBABLY B'LIEVE YOU'RE ÖRVA, DONCHA THINK?
... AND YOU'VE GOT TO ADMIT, GNUFF, YOU ACTUALLY WERE ÖRVA AT ONE TIME...
YEAH...


BUT THAT WAS THEN! AND THIS CONSTANT SURVEILLANCE IS DRIVING ME UP THE WALL! ESPECIALLY CONSIDERING HOW LOUSY THE NEW ÖRVAS ARE!
WE KNOW IT'S HARD...
HOW 'BOUT TRYIN' TA CATCH YOUR SUCCESSOR?


I'VE CONSIDERED IT, GNICKY... ALTHOUGH IT RUNS COUNTER TO THE ÖRVA CREED, THE NEW ÖRVAS ARE SO INEPT I'M SORELY TEMPTED TO ACT...
YEAH, FOR THE SAKE OF ÖRVAS GOOD NAME...


WE DO MISS HAVING A PRIVATE LIFE...
I'LL HELP YA AGAIN THIS TIME, GNUFF... AND I GOT A PLAN...
YOU GOT A PLAN, GNICKY?
WELL, LET'S HEAR YOUR PLAN, THEN...

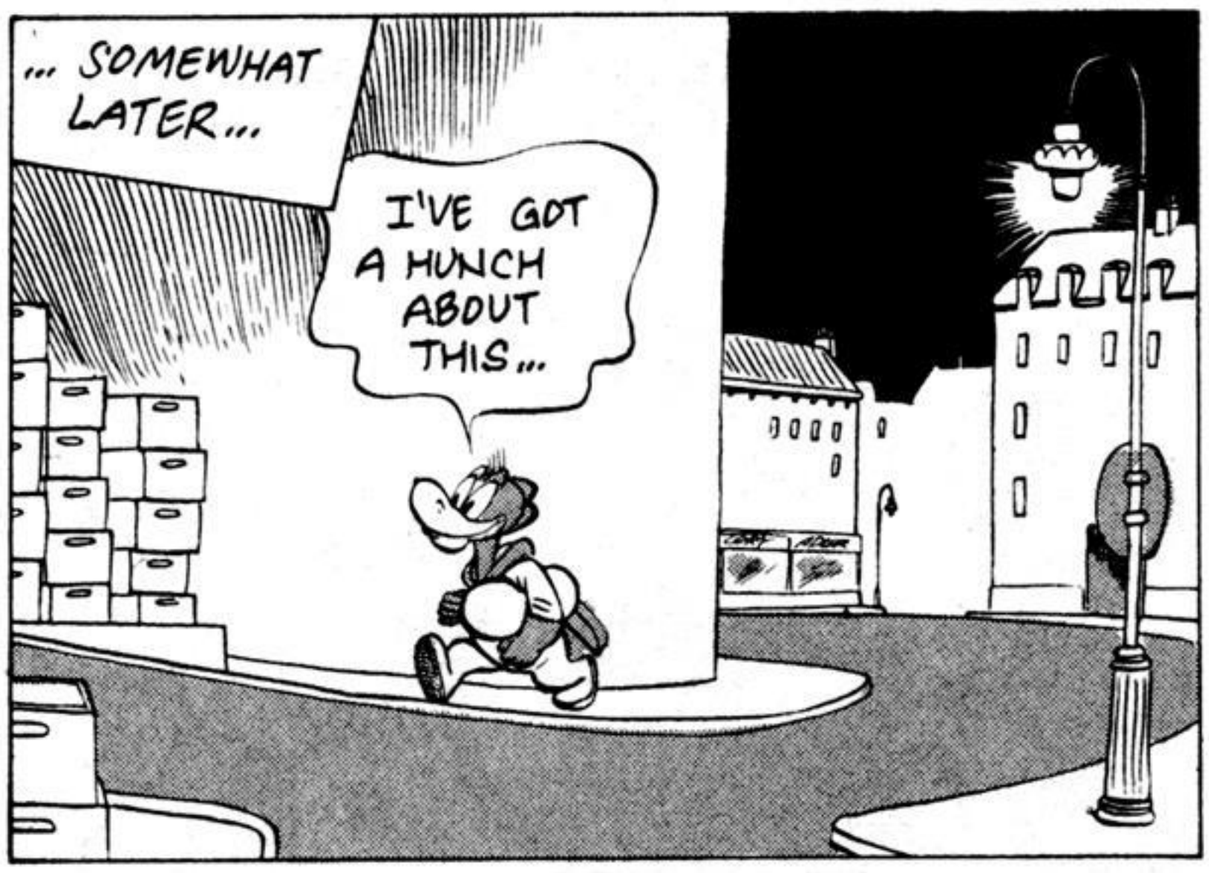

PRESENTLY GNICKY SNEAKS DOWN THE BACK STAIRWAY WITH A PACKAGE ...

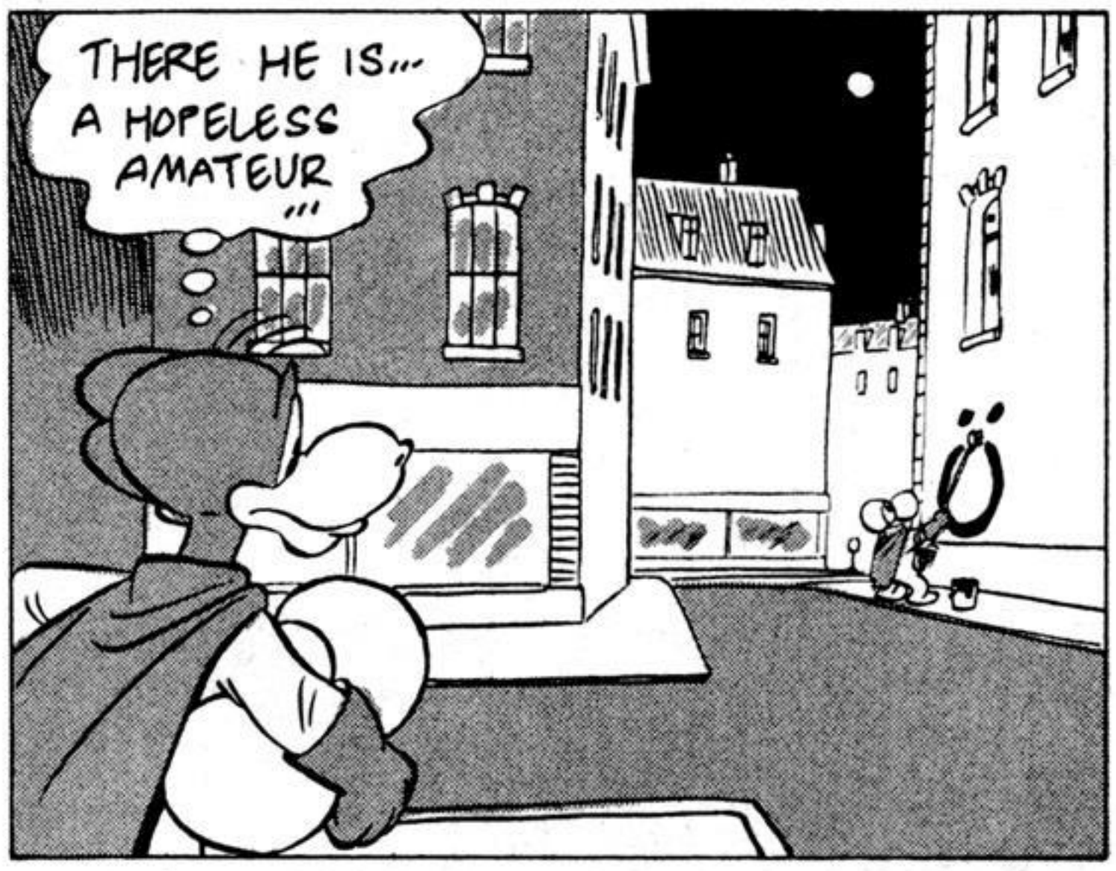
IN AN ALLEY HE DONS THE COSTUME ...

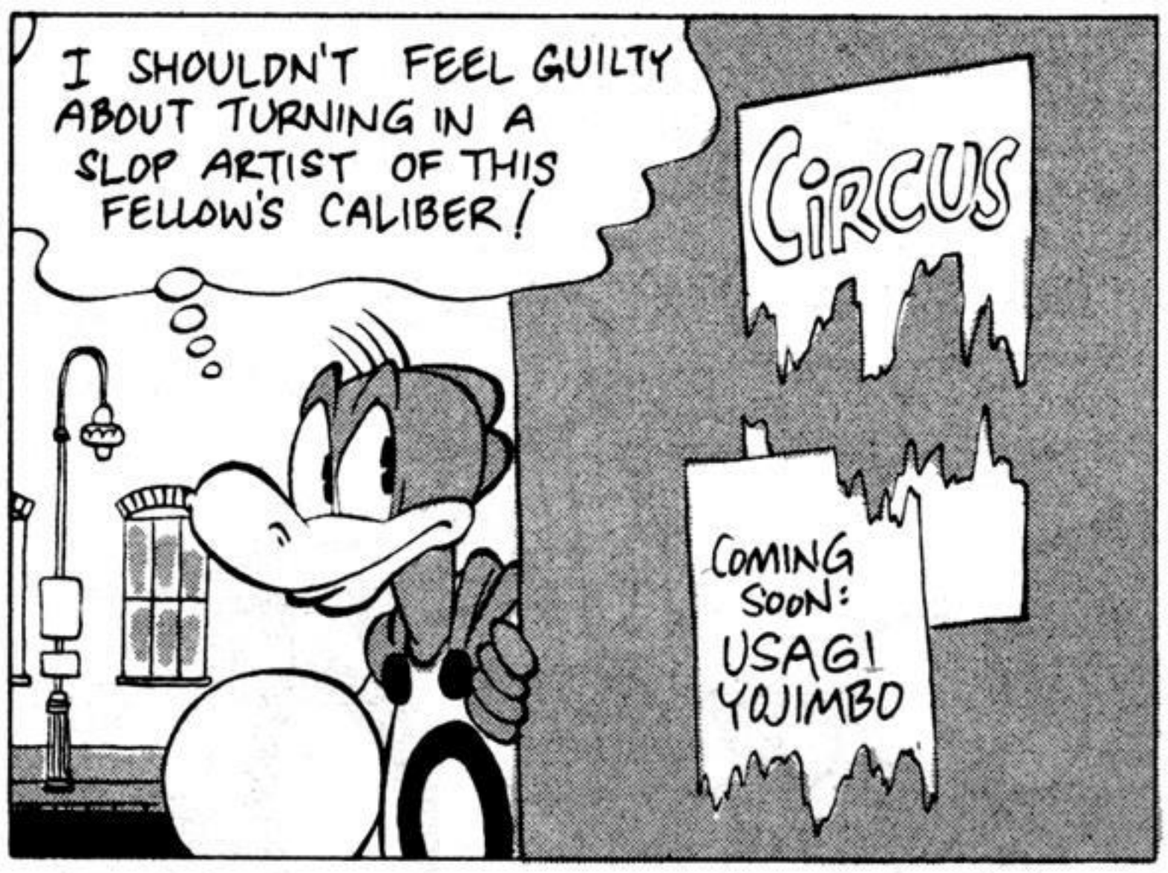
AND SOON THEREAFTER ...
PATROL TO HEADQUARTERS... ALERT! WE'VE GOT A LIVE ÖRVA!
ÖRVA
2

AHA! THE DETECTIVES WERE SUMMONED ON THE RADIO AND TOOK OFF... LOOKS LIKE GNICKY'S PLAN IS WORKING...
THE COAST IS CLEAR...

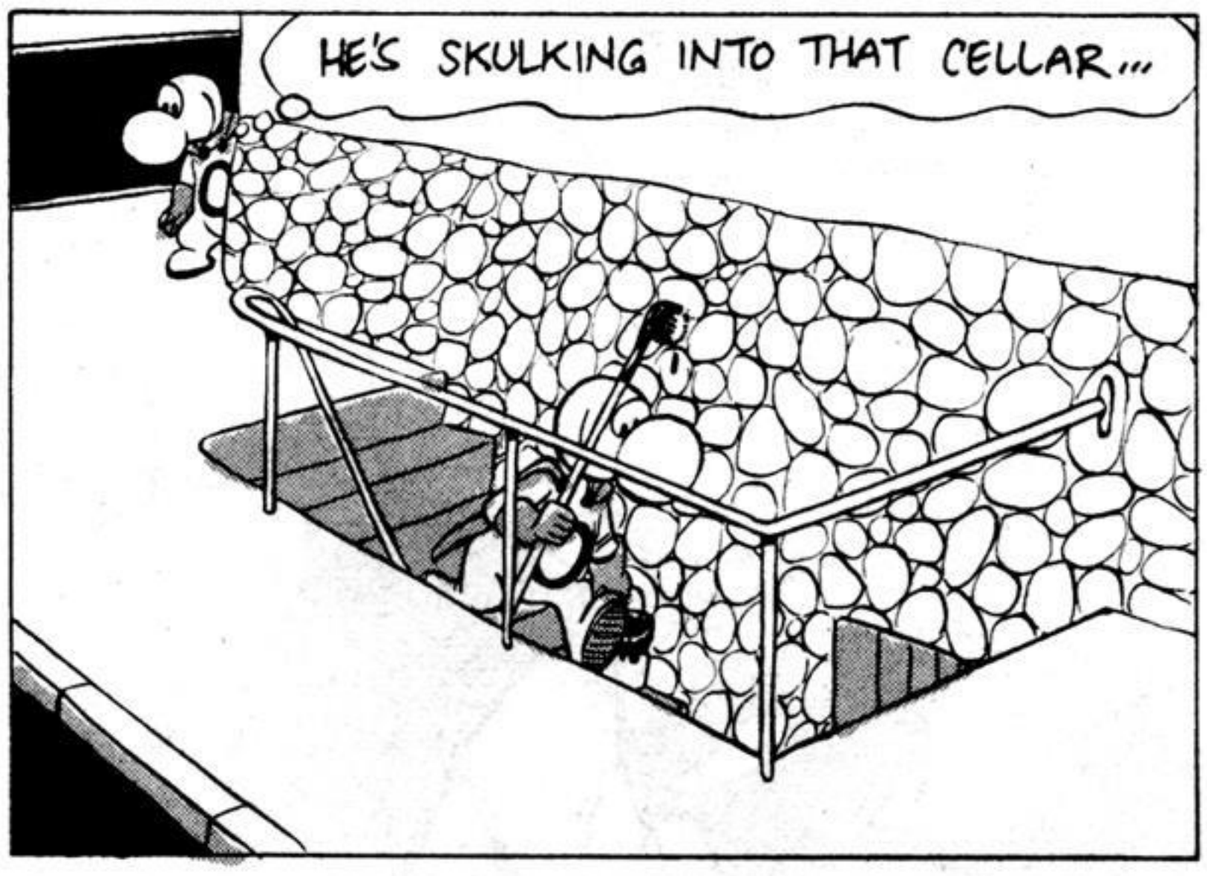
HOPEFULLY I'LL BE ABLE TO FIND MY UNKNOWN SUCCESSOR AS ÖRVA IN PEACE AND QUIET...

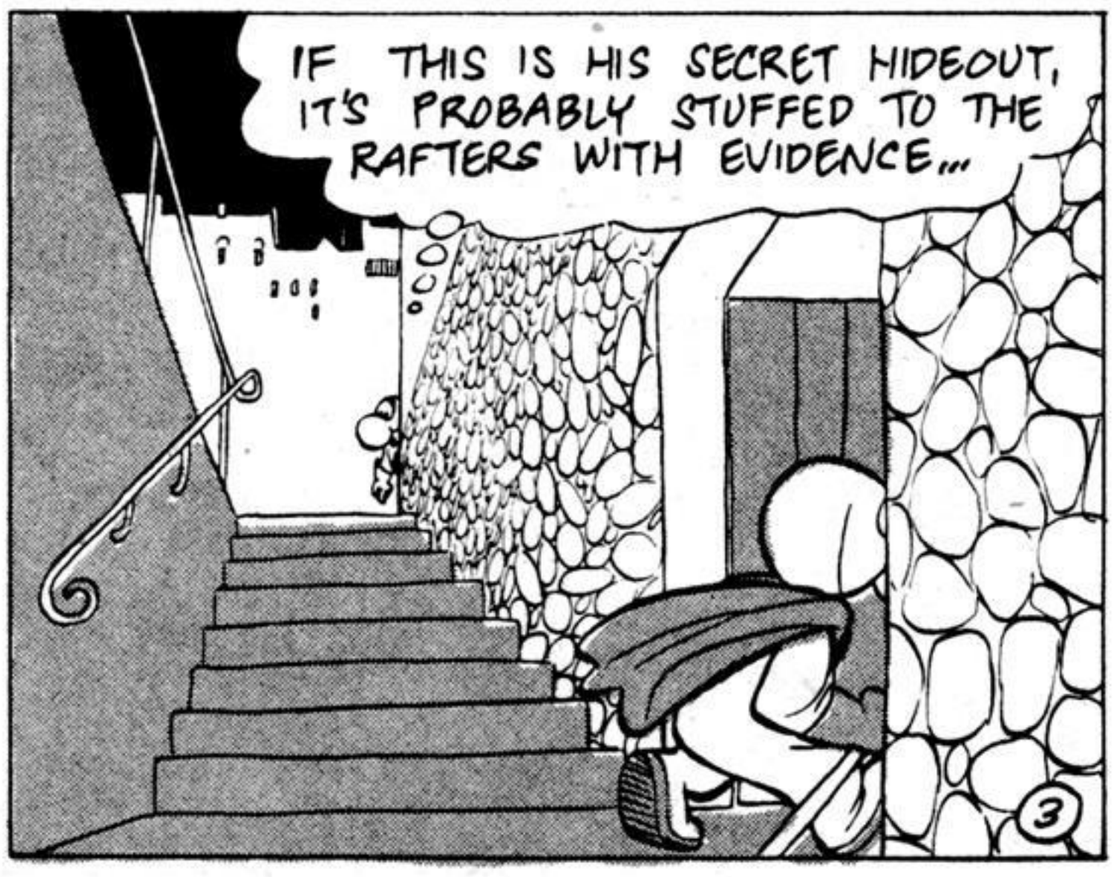

... SOMEWHAT LATER...
I'VE GOT A HUNCH ABOUT THIS...

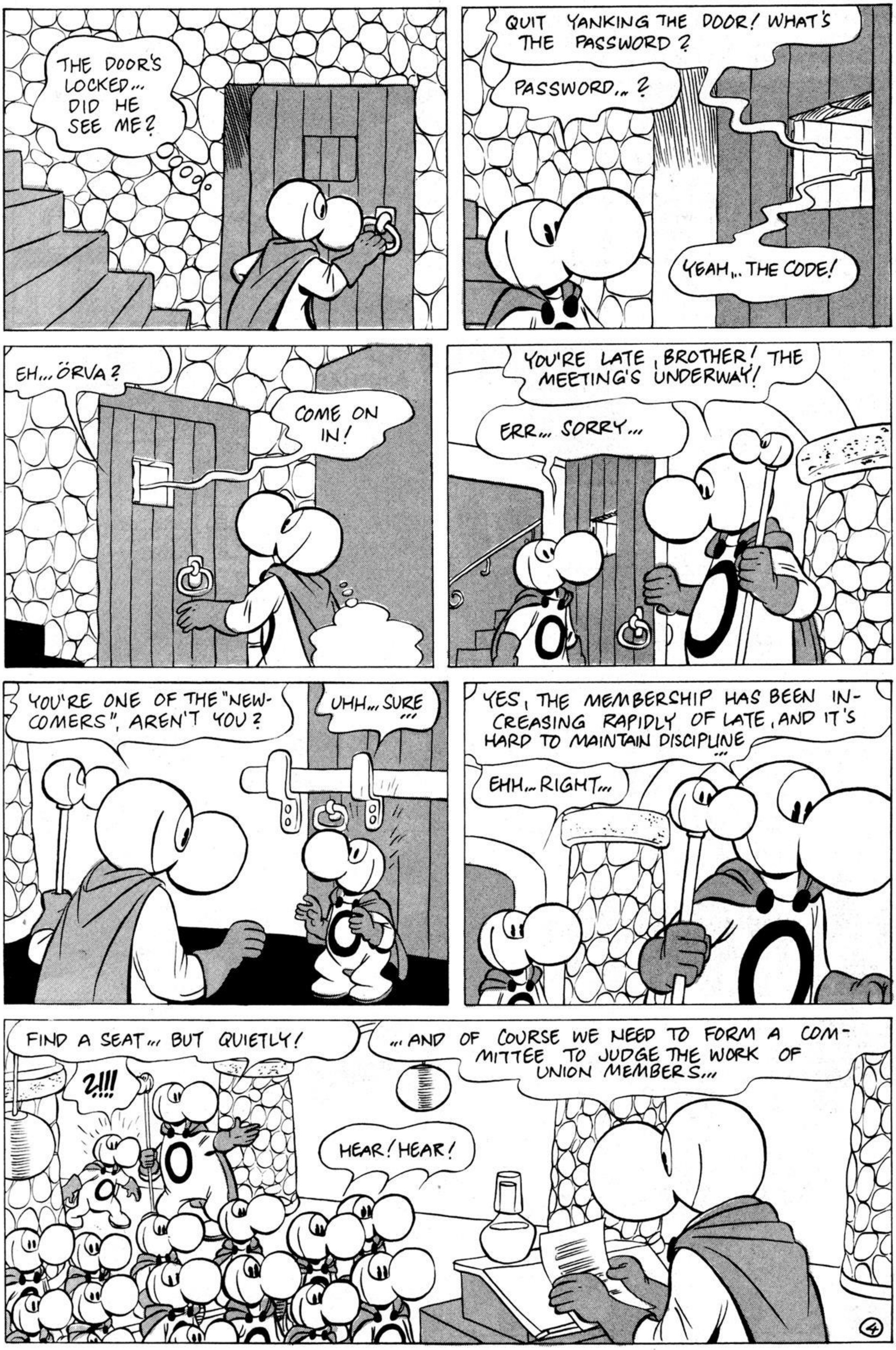

THERE HE IS... A HOPELESS AMATEUR...

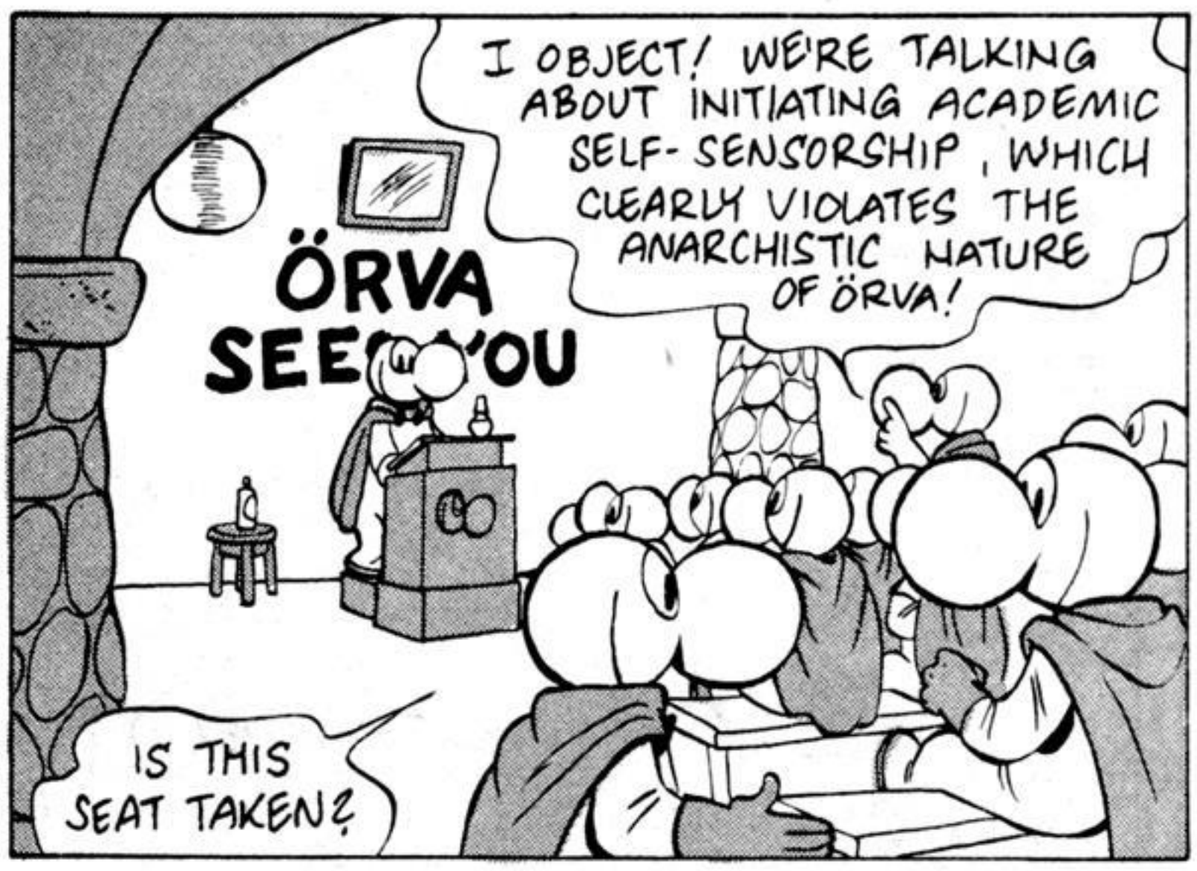

I SHOULDN'T FEEL GUILTY ABOUT TURNING IN A SLOP ARTIST OF THIS FELLOW'S CALIBER!
CIRCUS
COMING SOON: USAGI YOJIMBO

HE'S FINISHED HIS FEEBLE EFFORT... IS HE GOING TO DO ANOTHER ONE?


HE'S SKULKING INTO THAT CELLAR...


IF THIS IS HIS SECRET HIDEOUT, IT'S PROBABLY STUFFED TO THE RAFTERS WITH EVIDENCE...

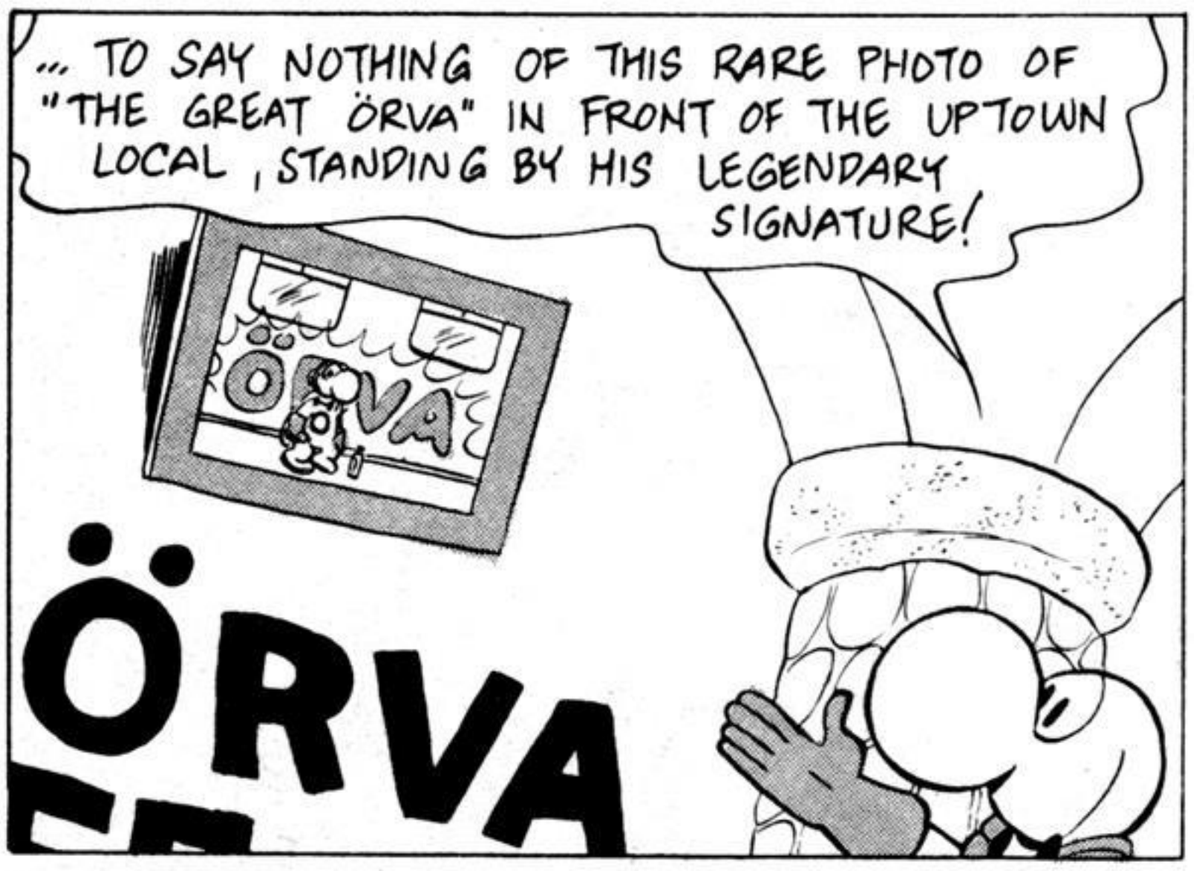

THE DOOR'S LOCKED... DID HE SEE ME?
QUIT YANKING THE DOOR! WHAT'S THE PASSWORD?
PASSWORD...?
YEAH... THE CODE!
EH... ÖRVA?
COME ON IN!
YOU'RE LATE, BROTHER! THE MEETING'S UNDERWAY!
ERR... SORRY...
YOU'RE ONE OF THE "NEW-COMERS", AREN'T YOU?
UHH... SURE...
YES, THE MEMBERSHIP HAS BEEN INCREASING RAPIDLY OF LATE, AND IT'S HARD TO MAINTAIN DISCIPLINE...
EHH... RIGHT...
FIND A SEAT... BUT QUIETLY!
?!!!
HEAR! HEAR!
...AND OF COURSE WE NEED TO FORM A COMMITTEE TO JUDGE THE WORK OF UNION MEMBERS...
4

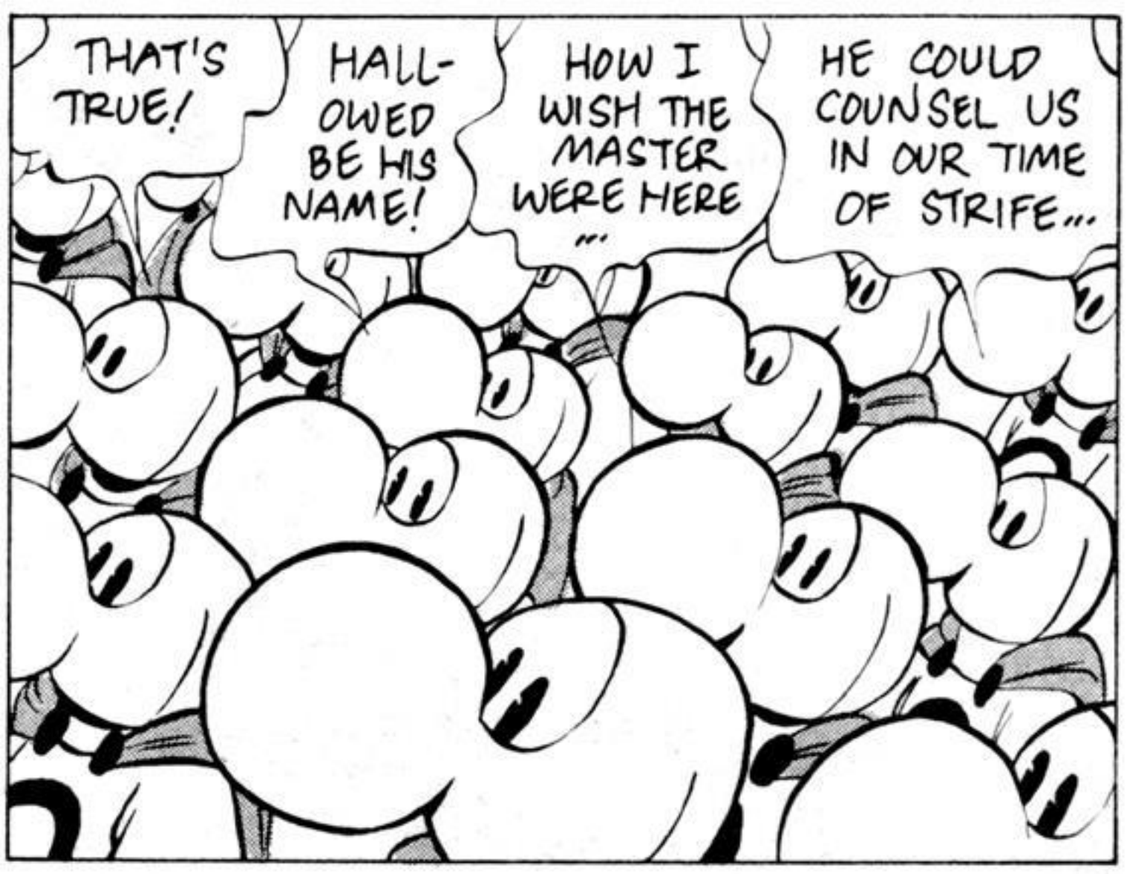

I OBJECT! WE'RE TALKING ABOUT INITIATING ACADEMIC SELF-SENSORSHIP, WHICH CLEARLY VIOLATES THE ANARCHISTIC NATURE OF ÖRVA!
ÖRVA SEES YOU
IS THIS SEAT TAKEN?

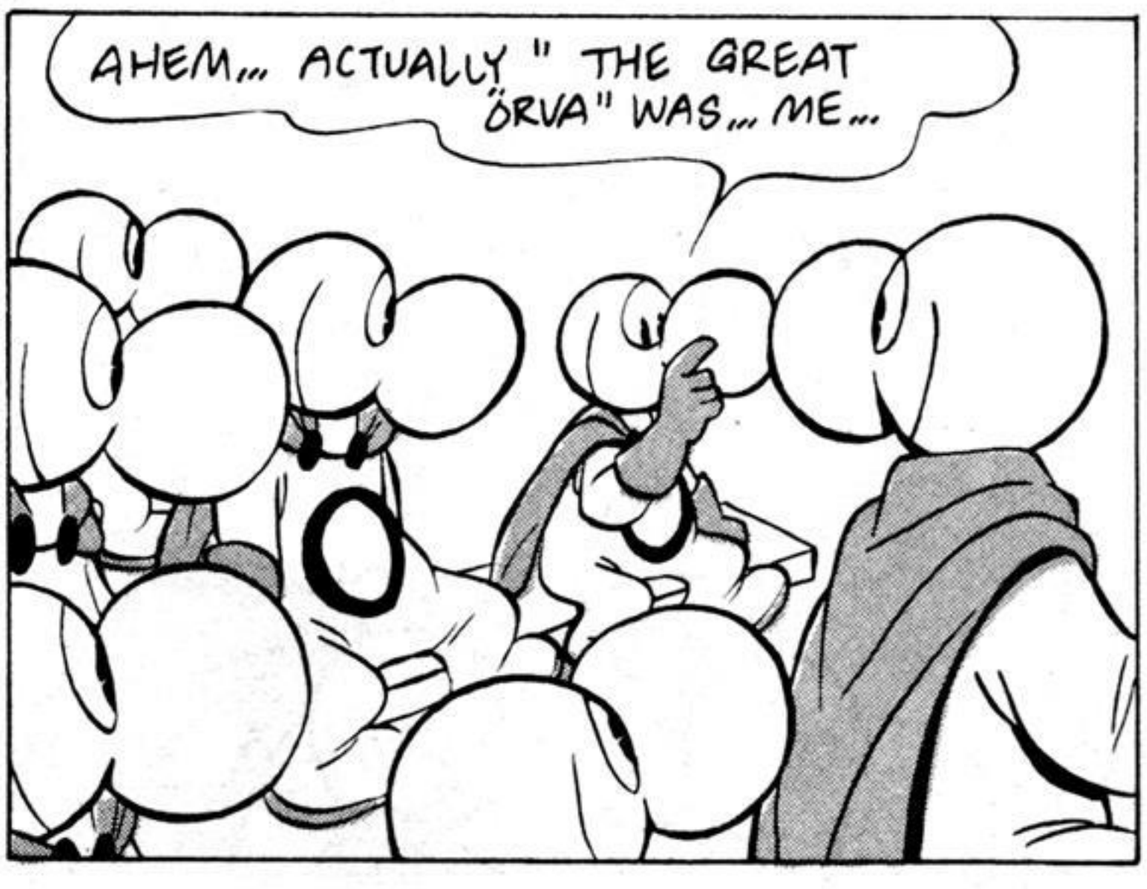
AS SPOKESMAN FOR THE ESTHETICS COMMITTEE I MUST PROTEST THE HONORED MEMBER'S LAISSEZ-FAIRE ATTITUDE ON THIS POINT! WE HAVE A NOBLE EXAMPLE IN "THE GREAT ÖRVA"!
YEAH!
ÖRVA SEES YOU

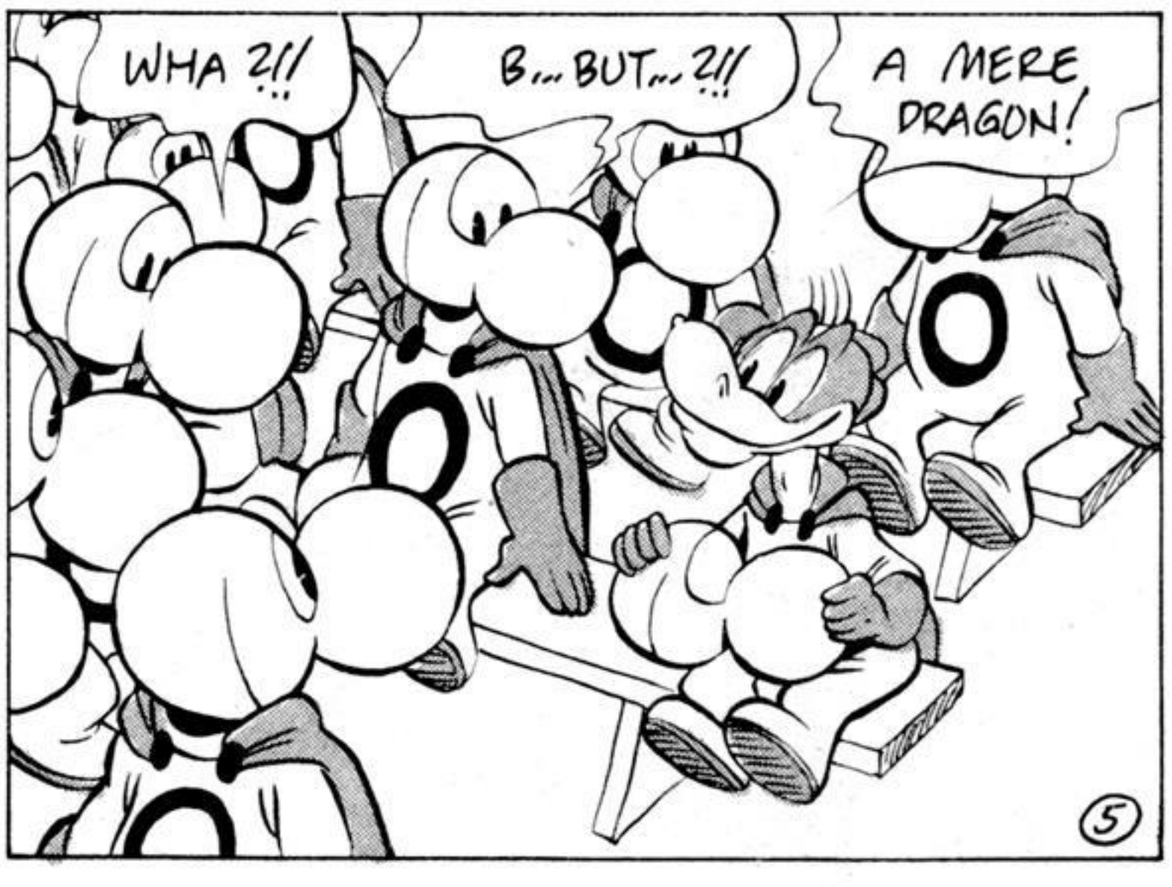
WELL SAID! LET US NOT FORGET THAT THIS ENTIRE SOCIETY IS FOUNDED ON THE GROUND BREAKING WORK OF "THE GREAT ÖRVA"!
RIGHT!
ABSOLUTELY!
YO!
ÖRVA SEES YOU

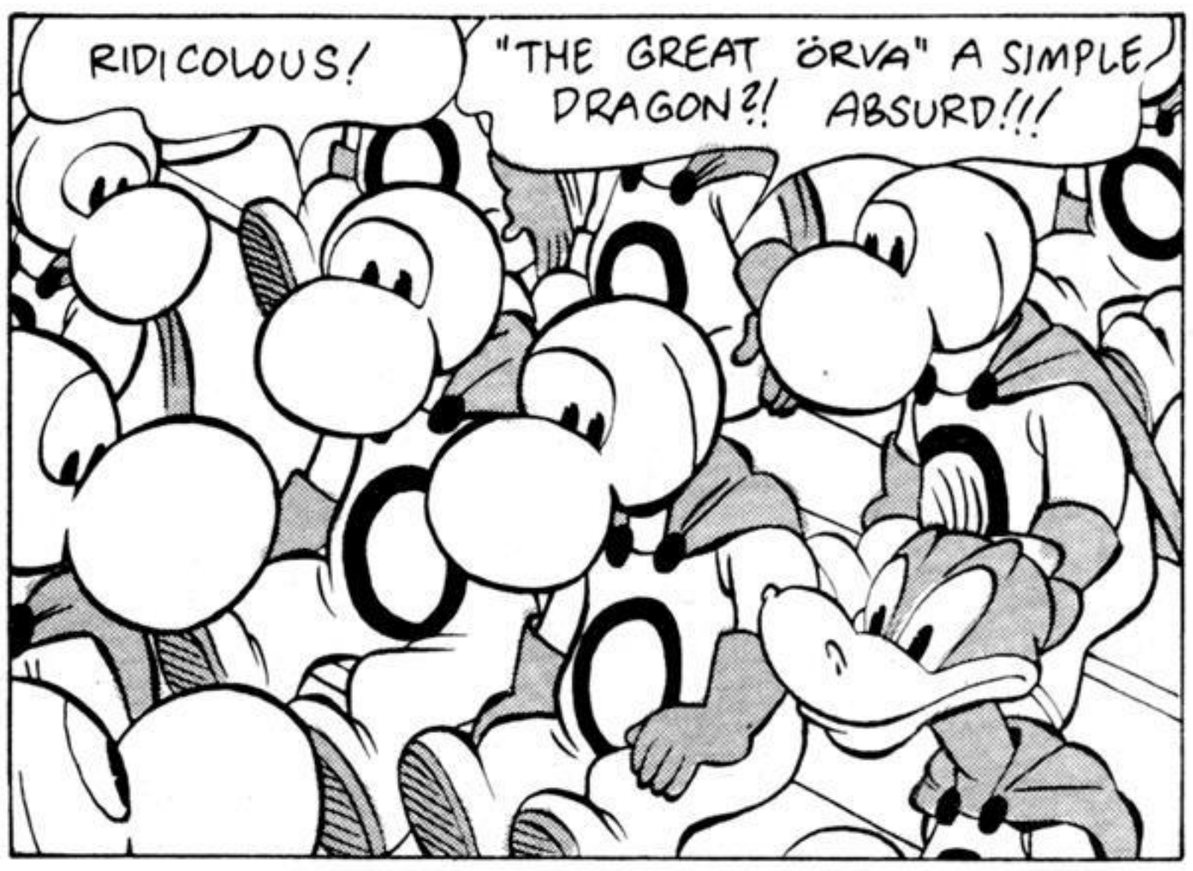
...OR IS IT MERE HAPPENSTANCE THAT THE STOOL OF HONOR IS OCCUPIED BY A SPRAYCAN WE KNOW BELONGED TO "THE GREAT ÖRVA"?
SEES YO
NO WAY!
TELL IT LIKE IT IS!

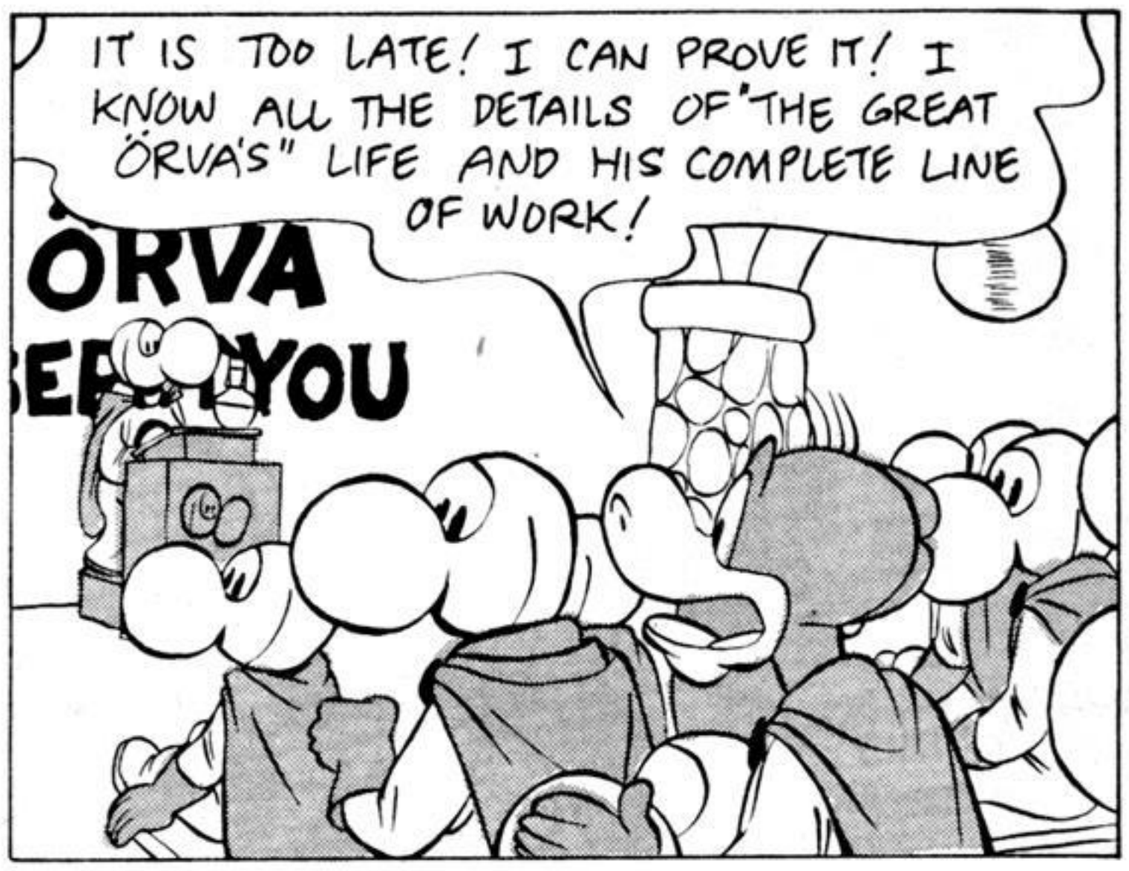

... TO SAY NOTHING OF THIS RARE PHOTO OF "THE GREAT ÖRVA" IN FRONT OF THE UPTOWN LOCAL, STANDING BY HIS LEGENDARY SIGNATURE!
ÖRVA

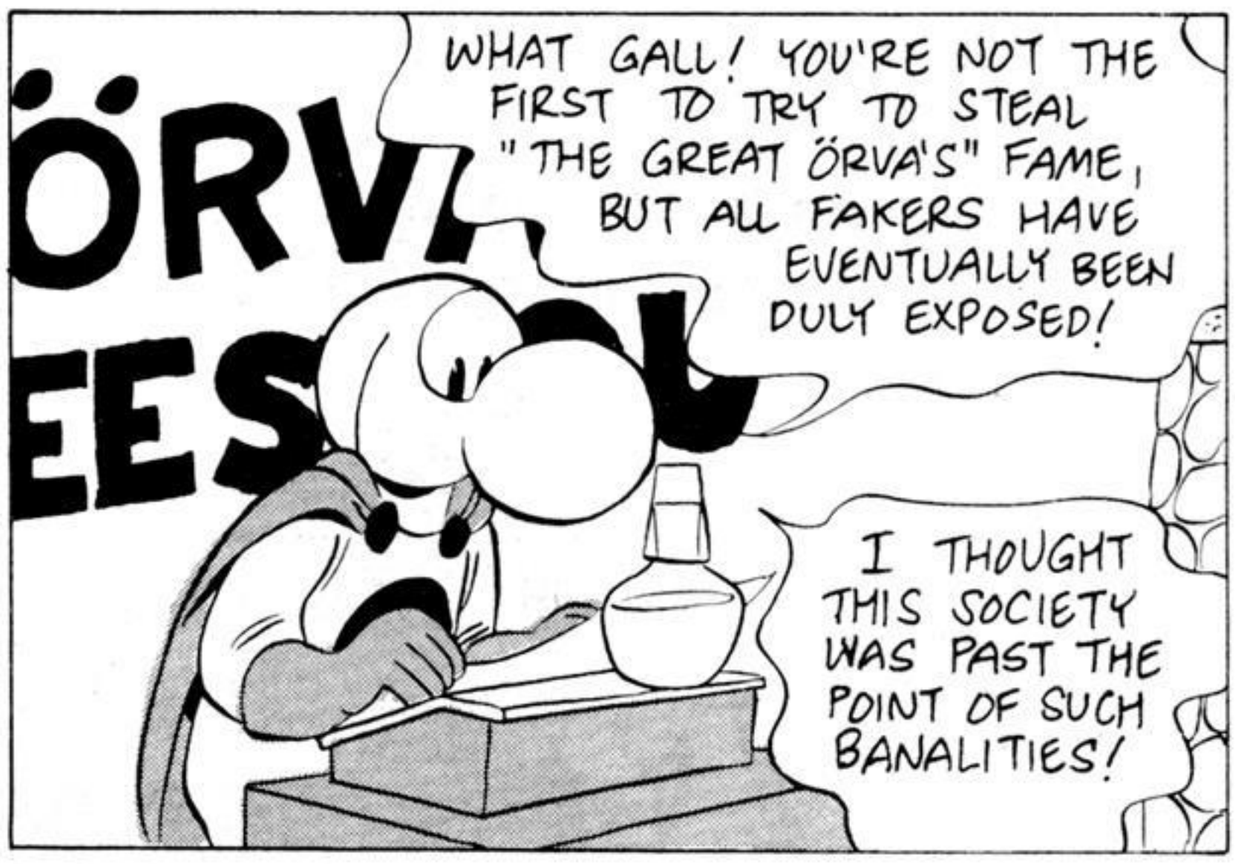

THAT'S TRUE!
HALLOWED BE HIS NAME!
HOW I WISH THE MASTER WERE HERE...
HE COULD COUNSEL US IN OUR TIME OF STRIFE...


AHEM... ACTUALLY "THE GREAT ÖRVA" WAS... ME...

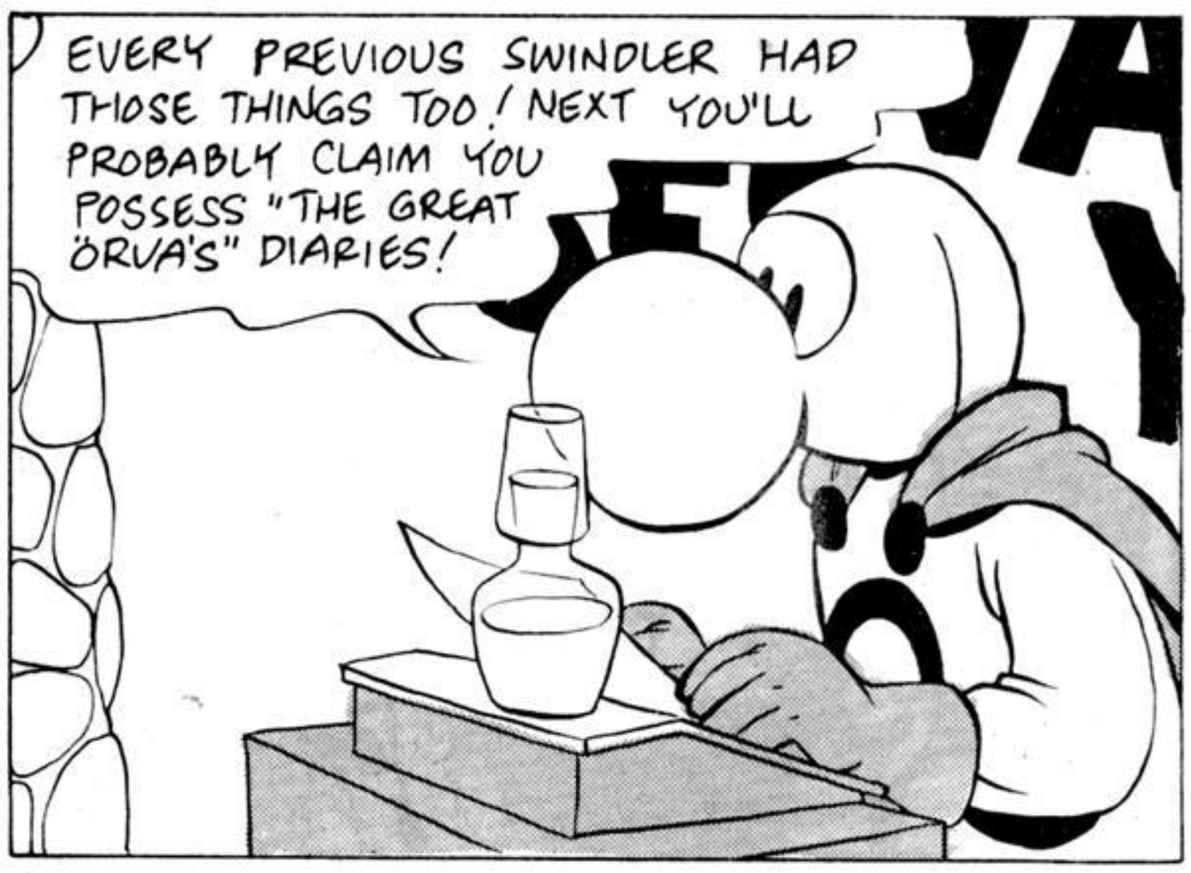

WHA?!!
B... BUT...?!!
A MERE DRAGON!

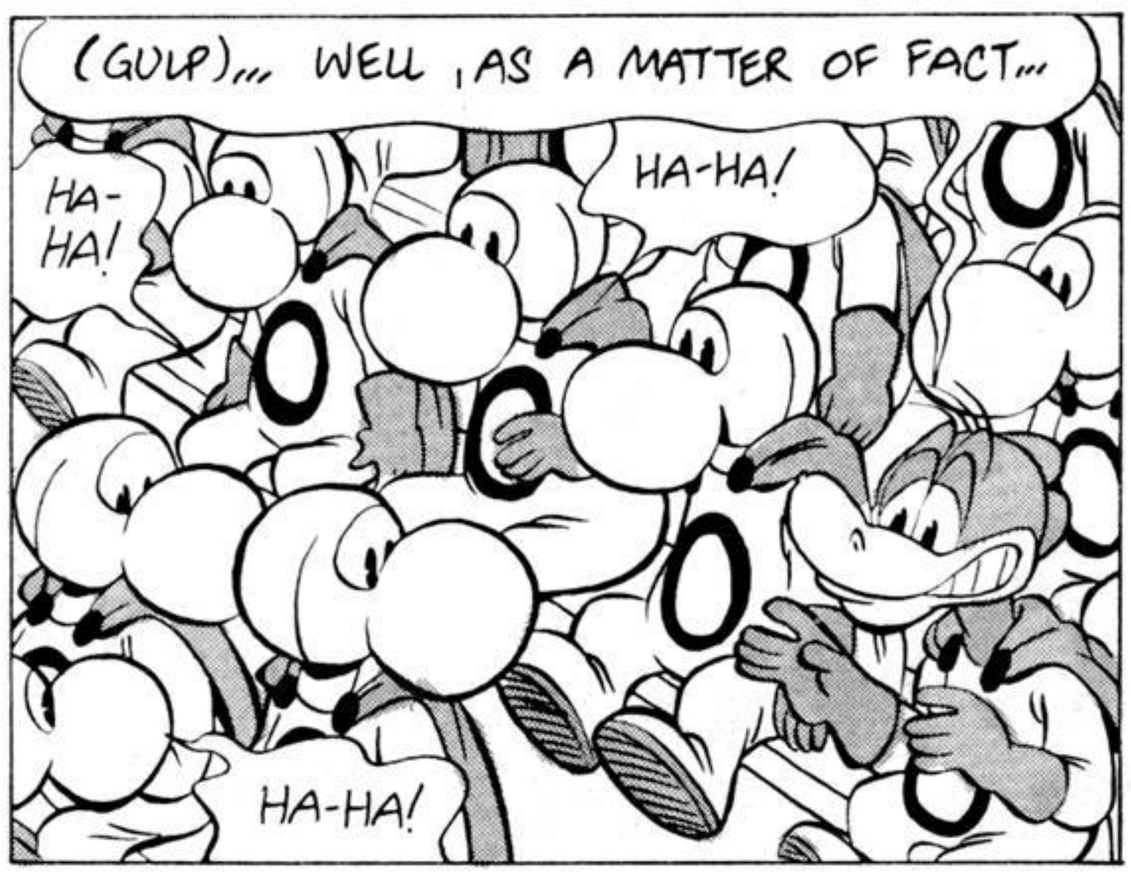

RIDICOLOUS!
"THE GREAT ÖRVA" A SIMPLE DRAGON?! ABSURD!!!


IT IS TOO LATE! I CAN PROVE IT! I KNOW ALL THE DETAILS OF "THE GREAT ÖRVA'S" LIFE AND HIS COMPLETE LINE OF WORK!

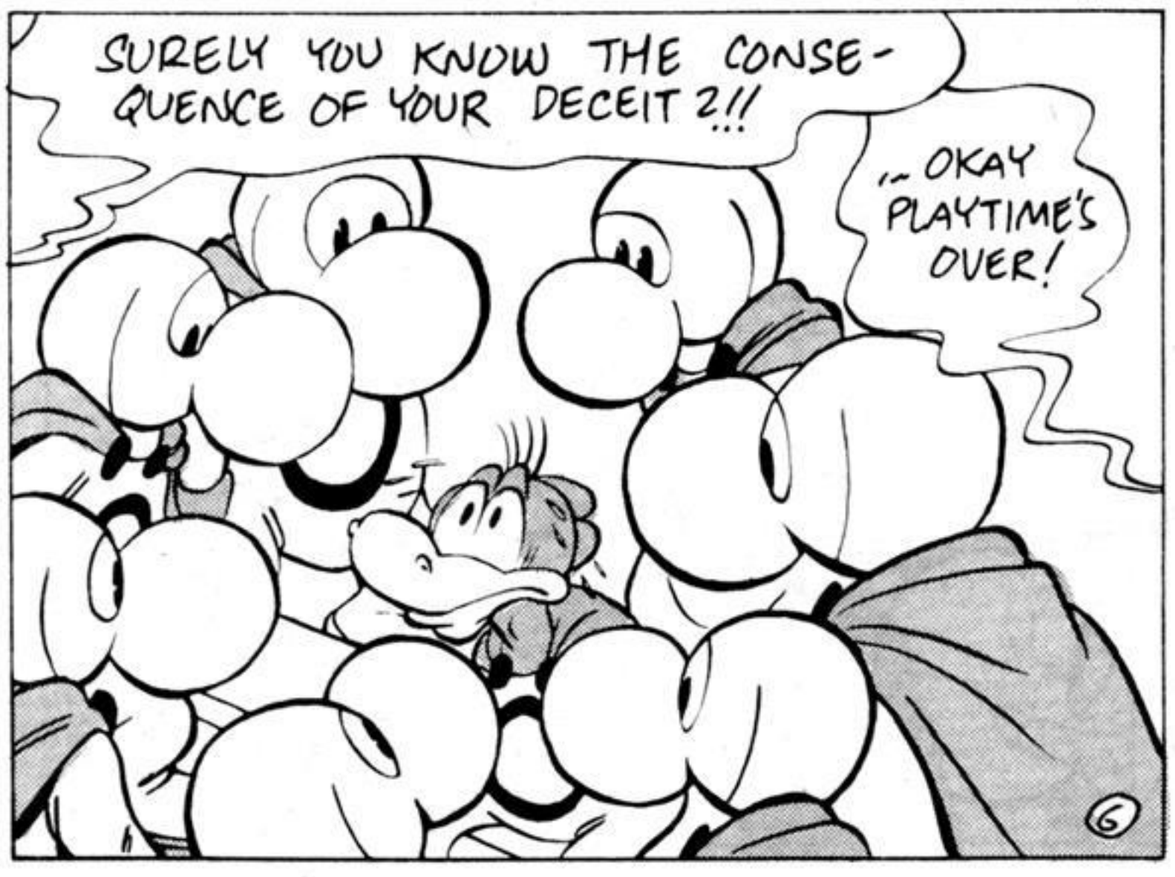

WHAT GALL! YOU'RE NOT THE FIRST TO TRY TO STEAL "THE GREAT ÖRVA'S" FAME, BUT ALL FAKERS HAVE EVENTUALLY BEEN DULY EXPOSED!
I THOUGHT THIS SOCIETY WAS PAST THE POINT OF SUCH BANALITIES!

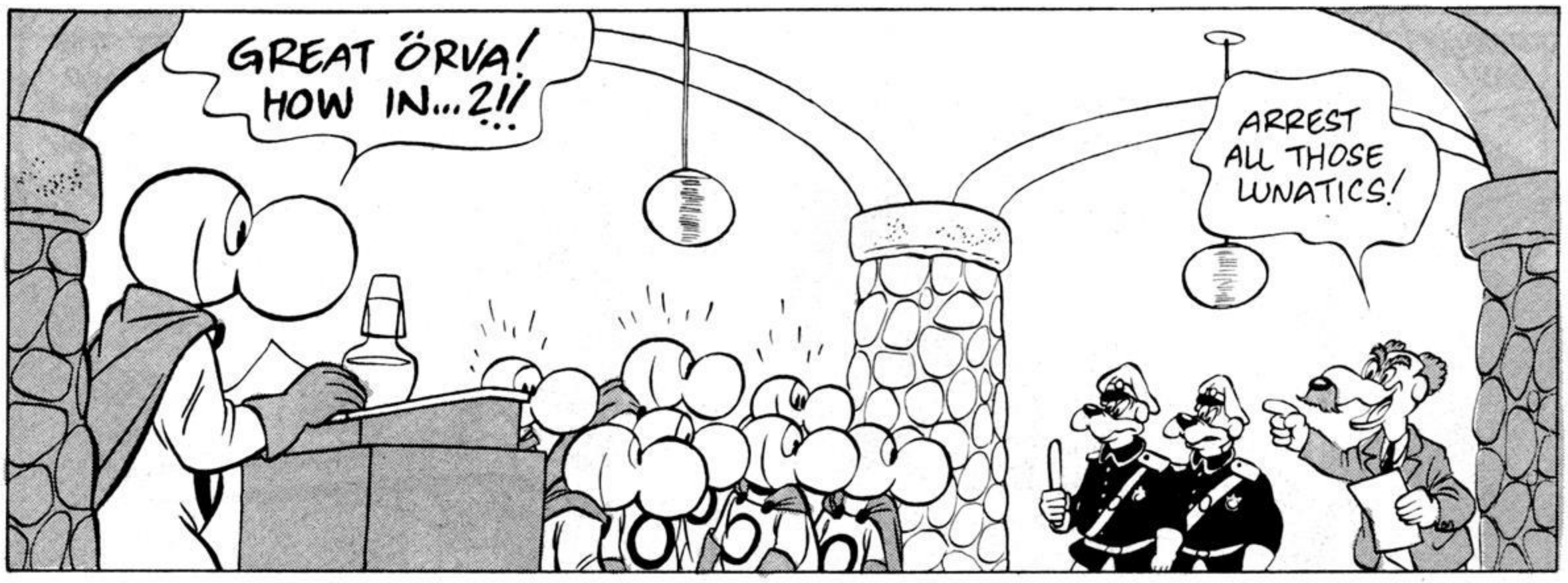
BUT I'VE GOT SKETCHES AT HOME... CALCULATIONS... SCHEDULES... A THOUSAND EMPTY SPRAYCANS...
SOME PEOPLE DON'T KNOW WHEN TO STOP!

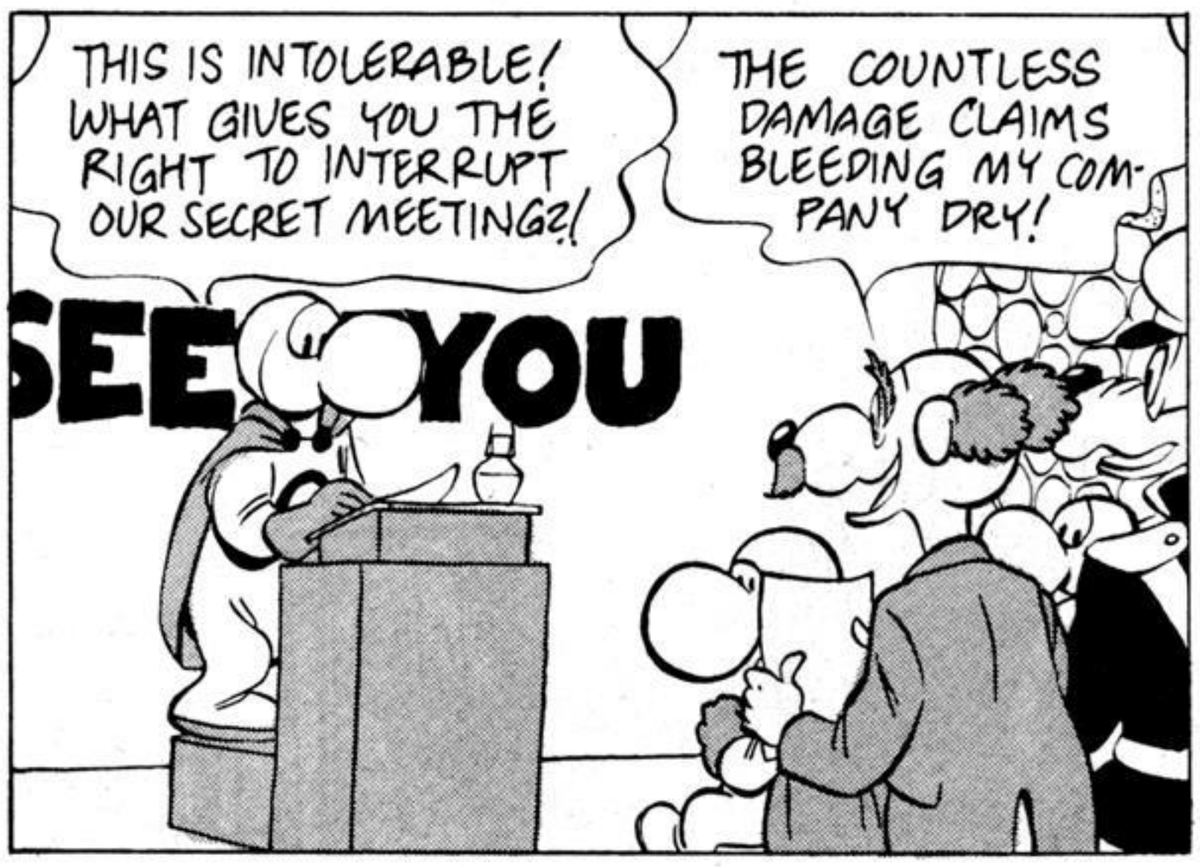

EVERY PREVIOUS SWINDLER HAD THOSE THINGS TOO! NEXT YOU'LL PROBABLY CLAIM YOU POSSESS "THE GREAT ÖRVA'S" DIARIES!

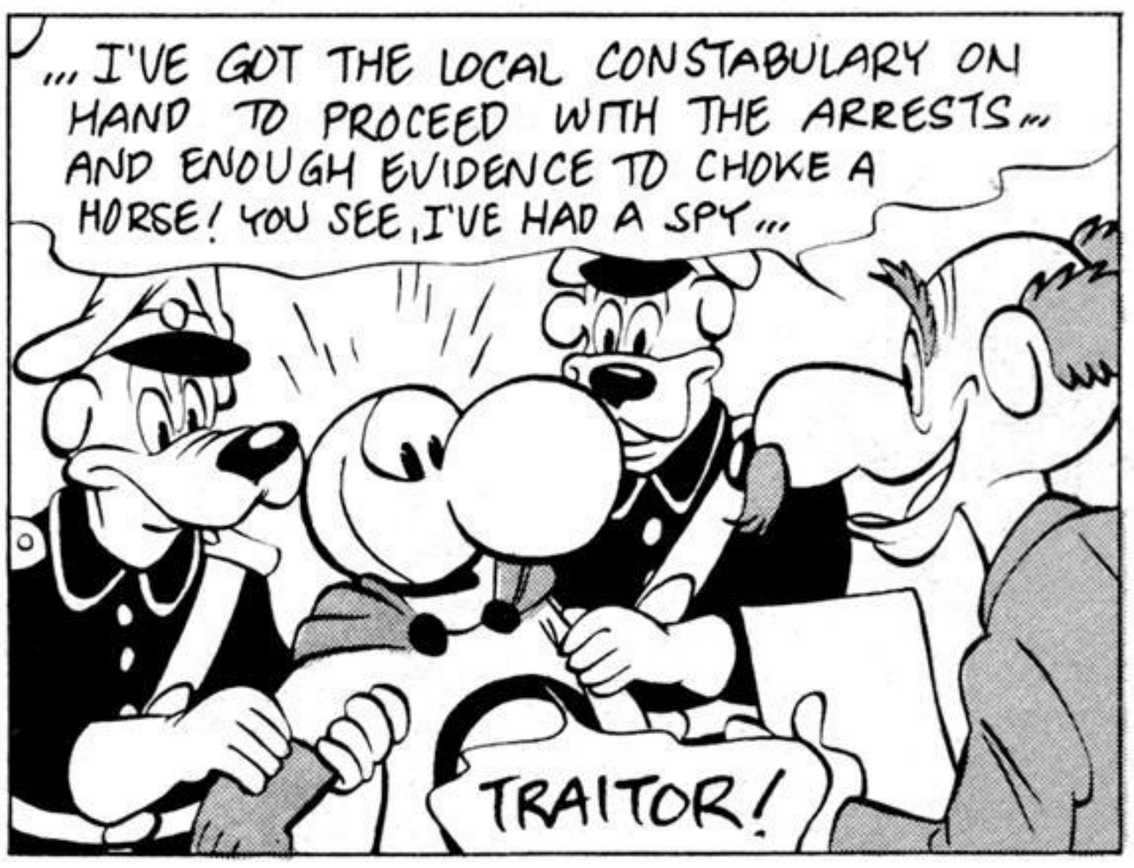

(GULP)... WELL, AS A MATTER OF FACT...
HA-HA!
HA-HA!
HA-HA!

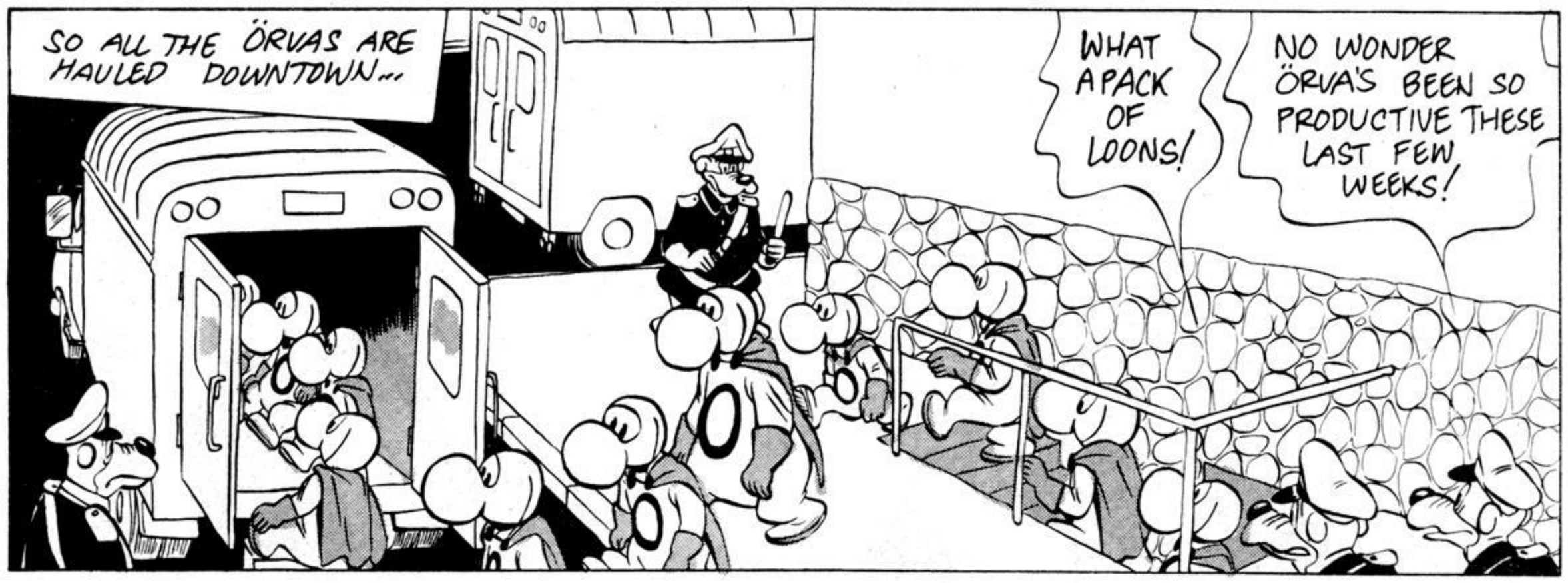
MY FRIEND, WHAT YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND IS THAT WE'RE DEALING WITH A MYTH HERE... AN IDEAL... AND NOT A MERE MORTAL BURDENED WITH DISTRACTING FLAWS AND BLEMISHES!

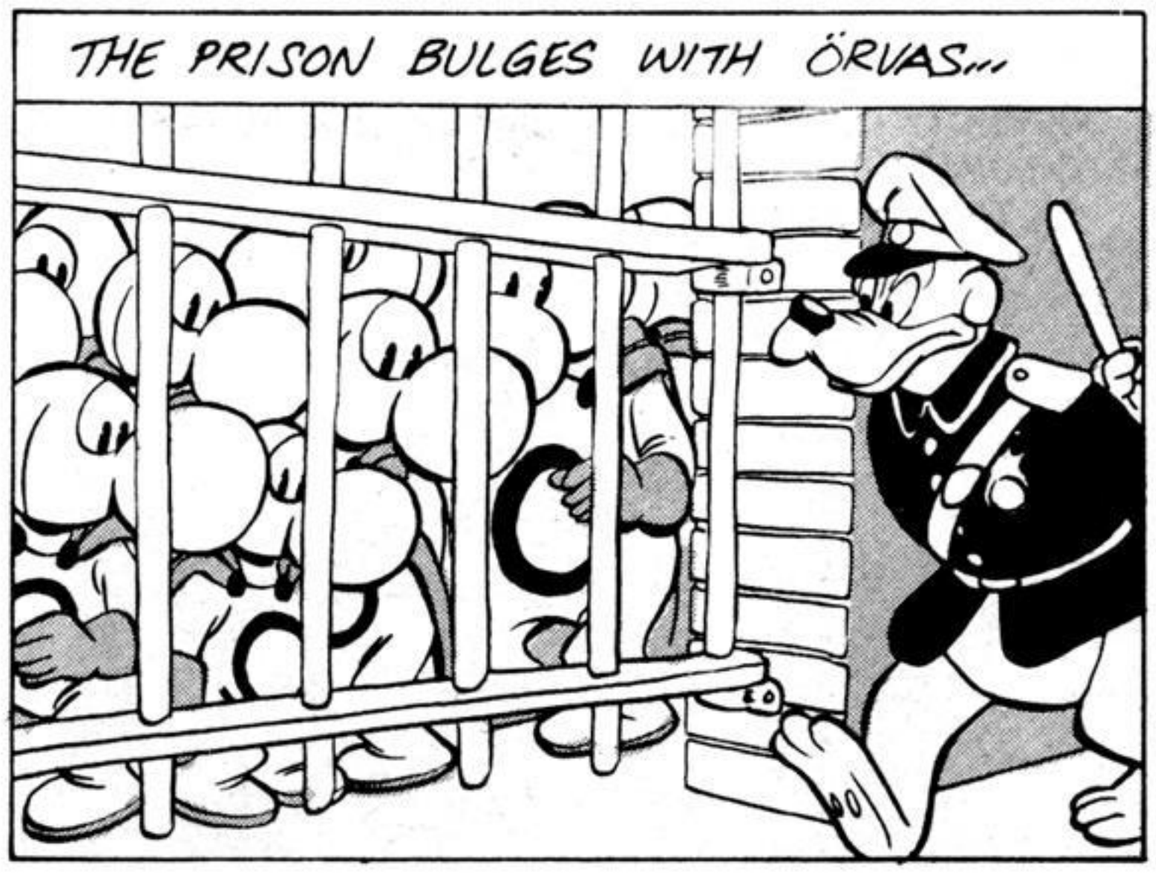

SURELY YOU KNOW THE CONSEQUENCE OF YOUR DECEIT?!!
...OKAY PLAYTIME'S OVER!


GREAT ÖRVA! HOW IN...?!!
ARREST ALL THOSE LUNATICS!

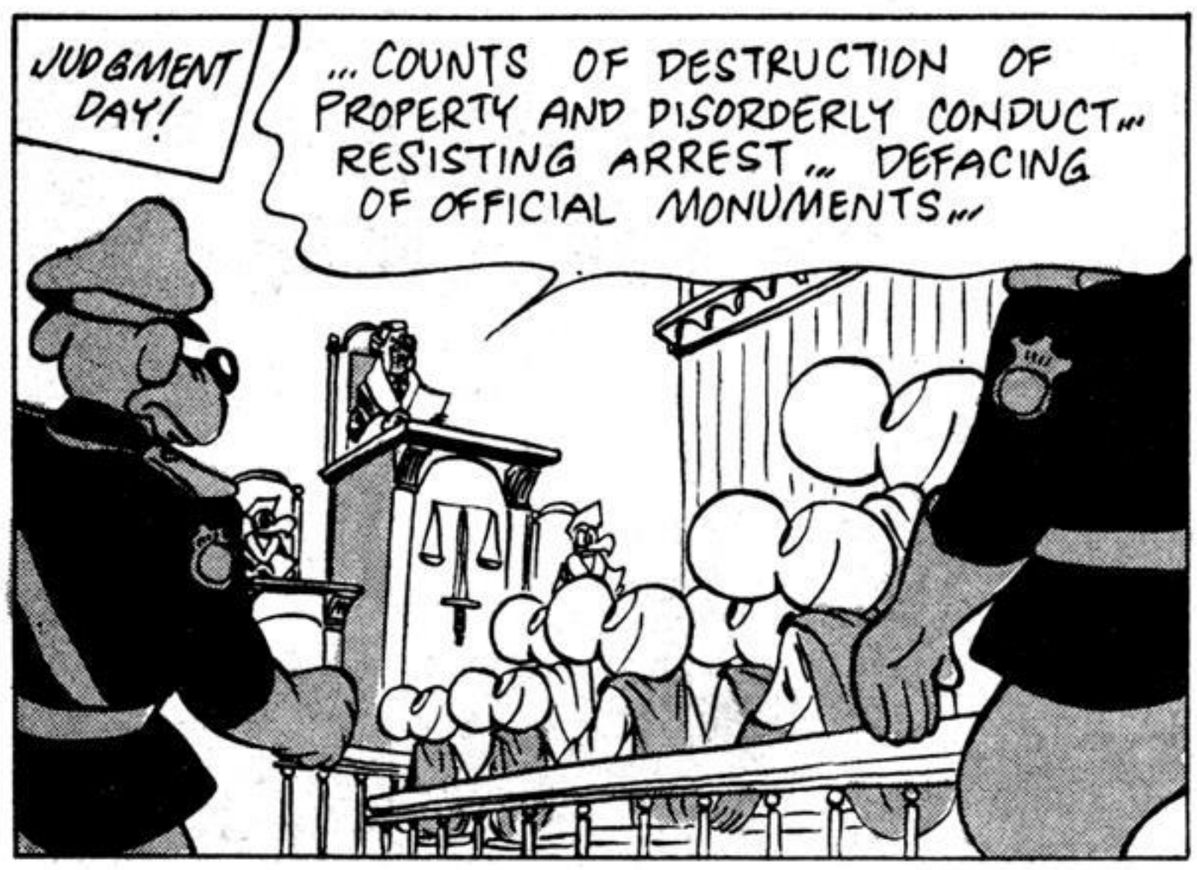

THIS IS INTOLERABLE! WHAT GIVES YOU THE RIGHT TO INTERRUPT OUR SECRET MEETING?!
THE COUNTLESS DAMAGE CLAIMS BLEEDING MY COMPANY DRY!
SEE YOU

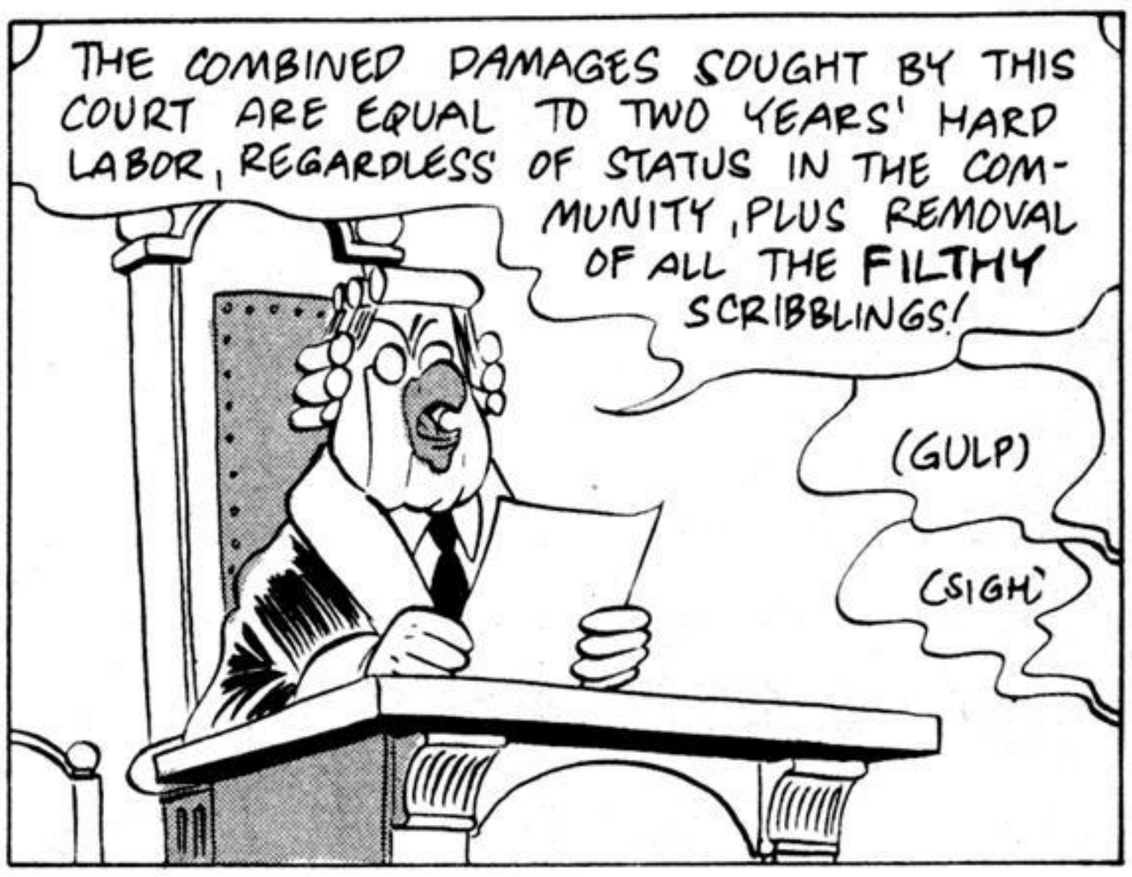

...I'VE GOT THE LOCAL CONSTABULARY ON HAND TO PROCEED WITH THE ARRESTS... AND ENOUGH EVIDENCE TO CHOKE A HORSE! YOU SEE, I'VE HAD A SPY...
TRAITOR!

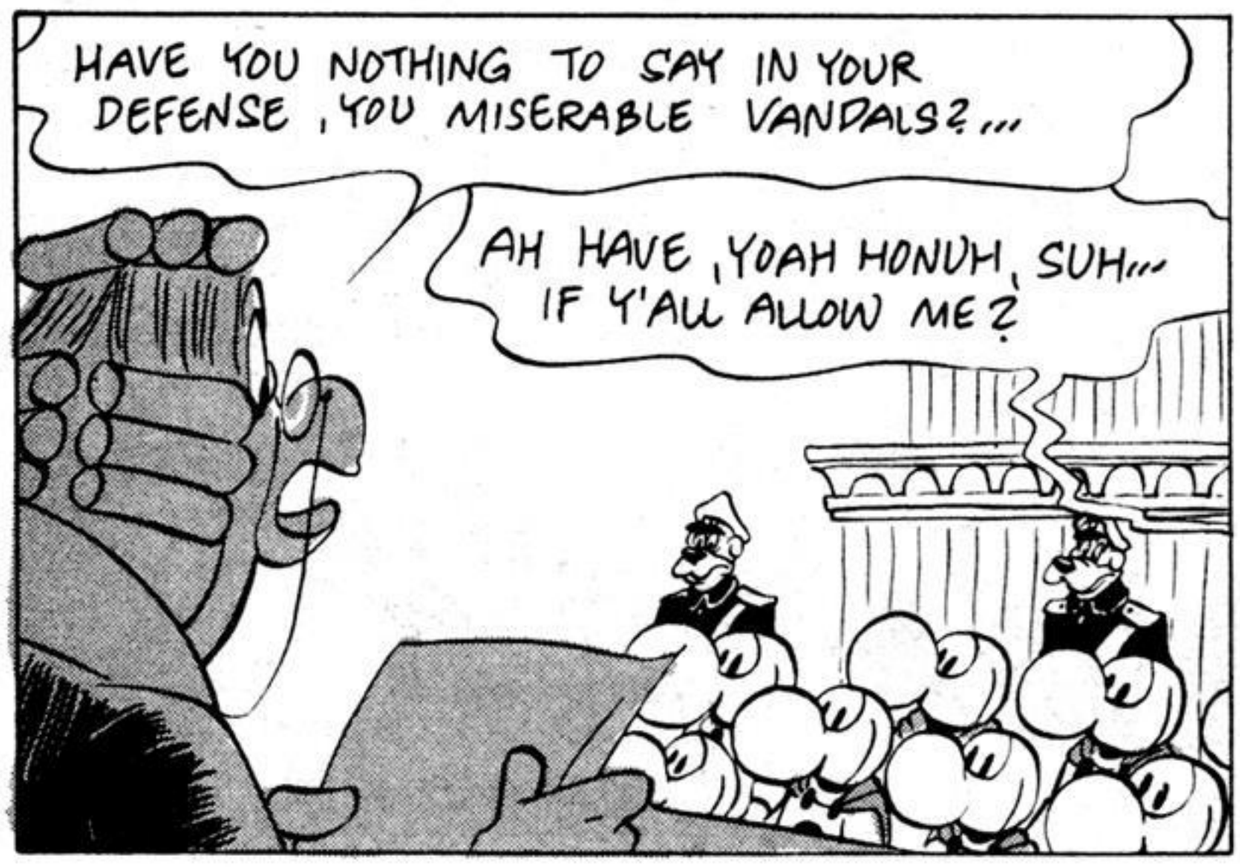

SO ALL THE ÖRVAS ARE HAULED DOWNTOWN...
WHAT A PACK OF LOONS!
NO WONDER ÖRVA'S BEEN SO PRODUCTIVE THESE LAST FEW WEEKS!


THE PRISON BULGES WITH ÖRVAS...

THERE'S SOME REAL PROMINENT CITIZENS AMONG 'EM... AND SOME MAJOR BRIBE OFFERS...
NO, McMUTT... IT'S TOO DANGEROUS THIS TIME AROUND...

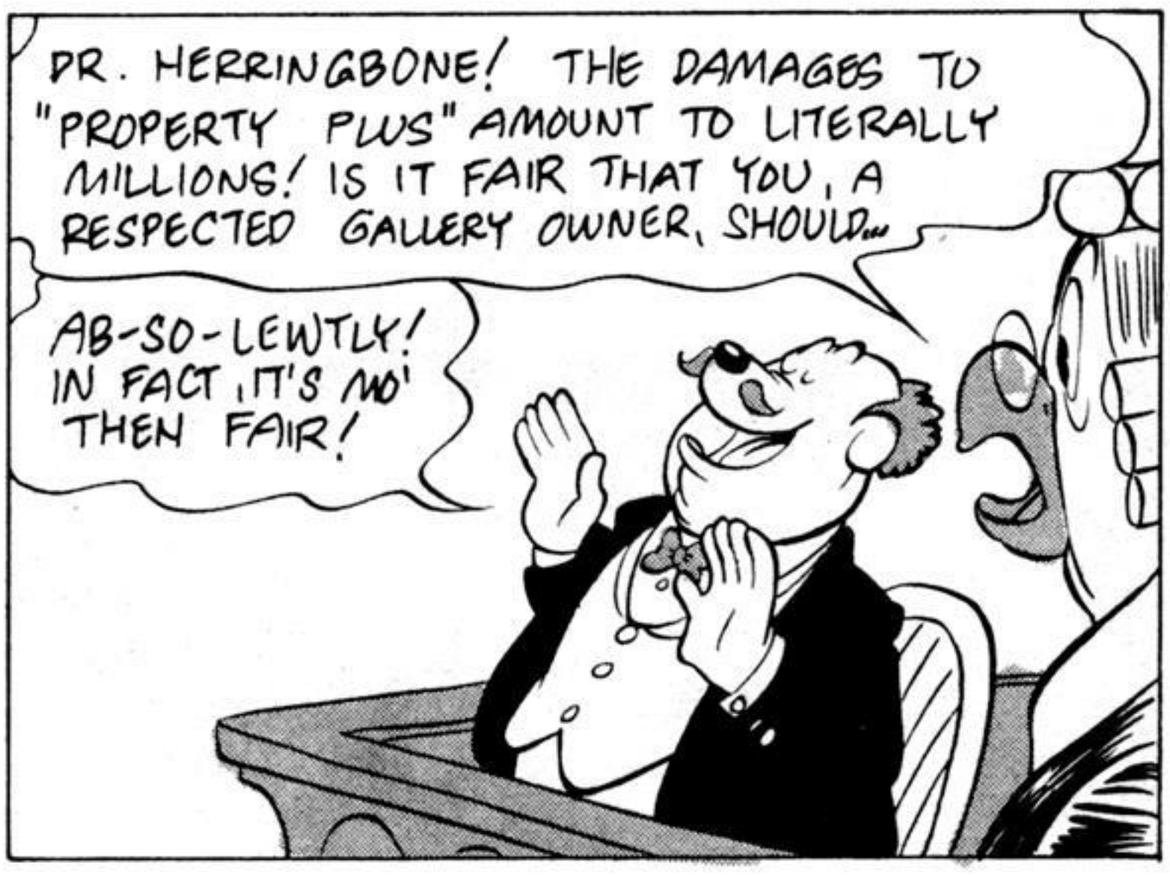

JUDGMENT DAY!
...COUNTS OF DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY AND DISORDERLY CONDUCT... RESISTING ARREST... DEFACING OF OFFICIAL MONUMENTS...


THE COMBINED DAMAGES SOUGHT BY THIS COURT ARE EQUAL TO TWO YEARS' HARD LABOR, REGARDLESS OF STATUS IN THE COMMUNITY, PLUS REMOVAL OF ALL THE FILTHY SCRIBBLINGS!
(GULP)
(SIGH)


HAVE YOU NOTHING TO SAY IN YOUR DEFENSE, YOU MISERABLE VANDALS?...
AH HAVE, YOAH HONUH, SUH... IF Y'ALL ALLOW ME?

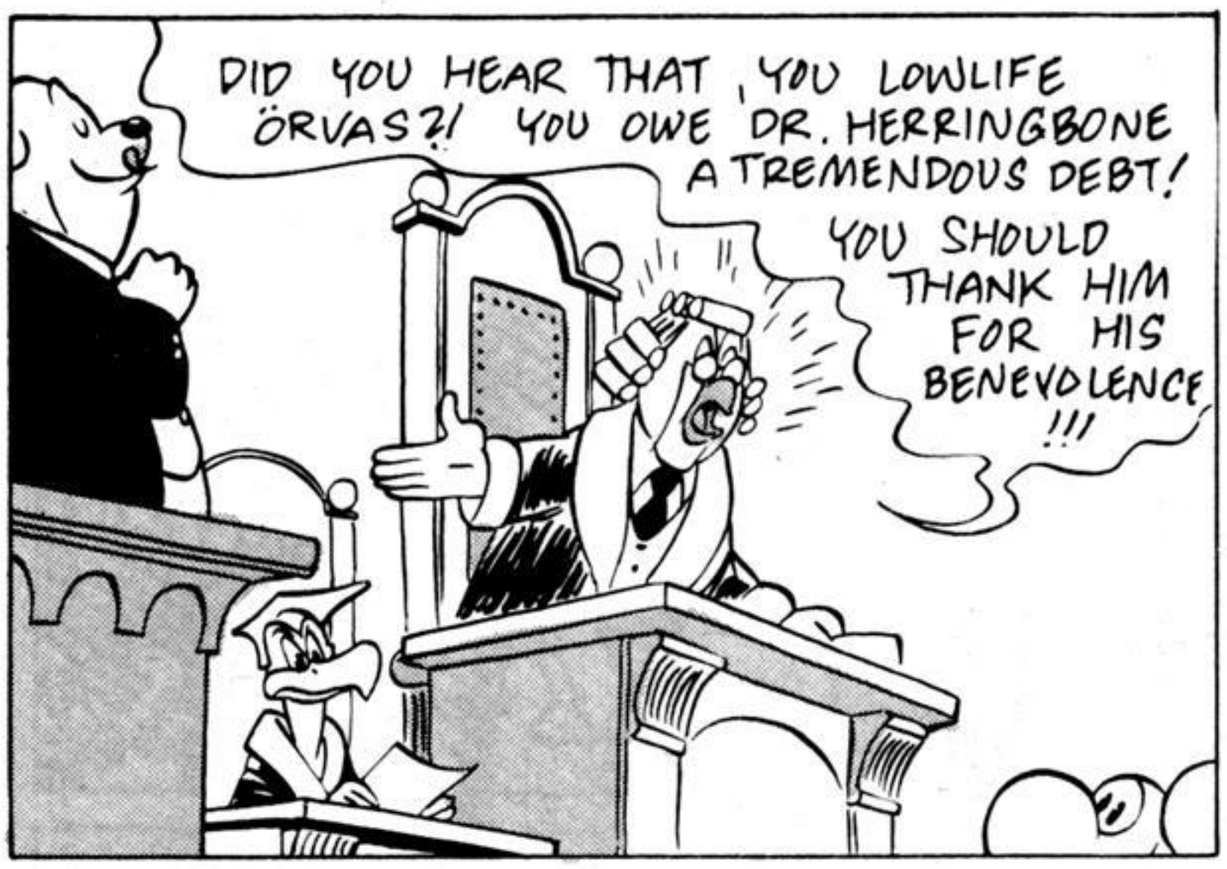
DOCTOR KEITH HERRINGBONE?! BUT??? VERY WELL, CONTINUE...
THANKS...

LADIES AN' GENNLEMEN! NOT TUH CUT SHO'T THUH JEWDICIAL PRO-CESS, BUT AH WUD LAHK TUH OFFUH TUH PAY THUH TOTAL DAMAGES FO' THUH WHOLE BUNCH!
?!!!

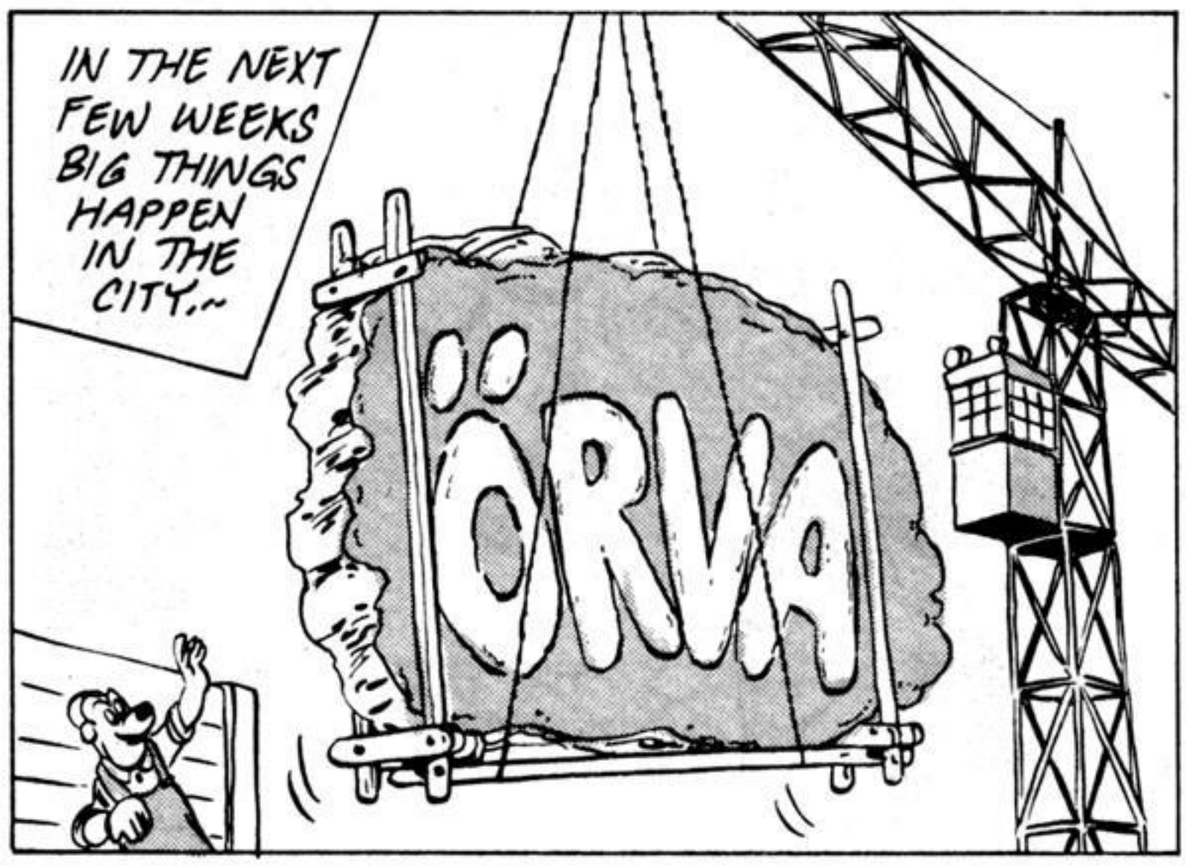

DR. HERRINGBONE! THE DAMAGES TO "PROPERTY PLUS" AMOUNT TO LITERALLY MILLIONS! IS IT FAIR THAT YOU, A RESPECTED GALLERY OWNER, SHOULD...
AB-SO-LEWTLY! IN FACT, IT'S NO' THEN FAIR!

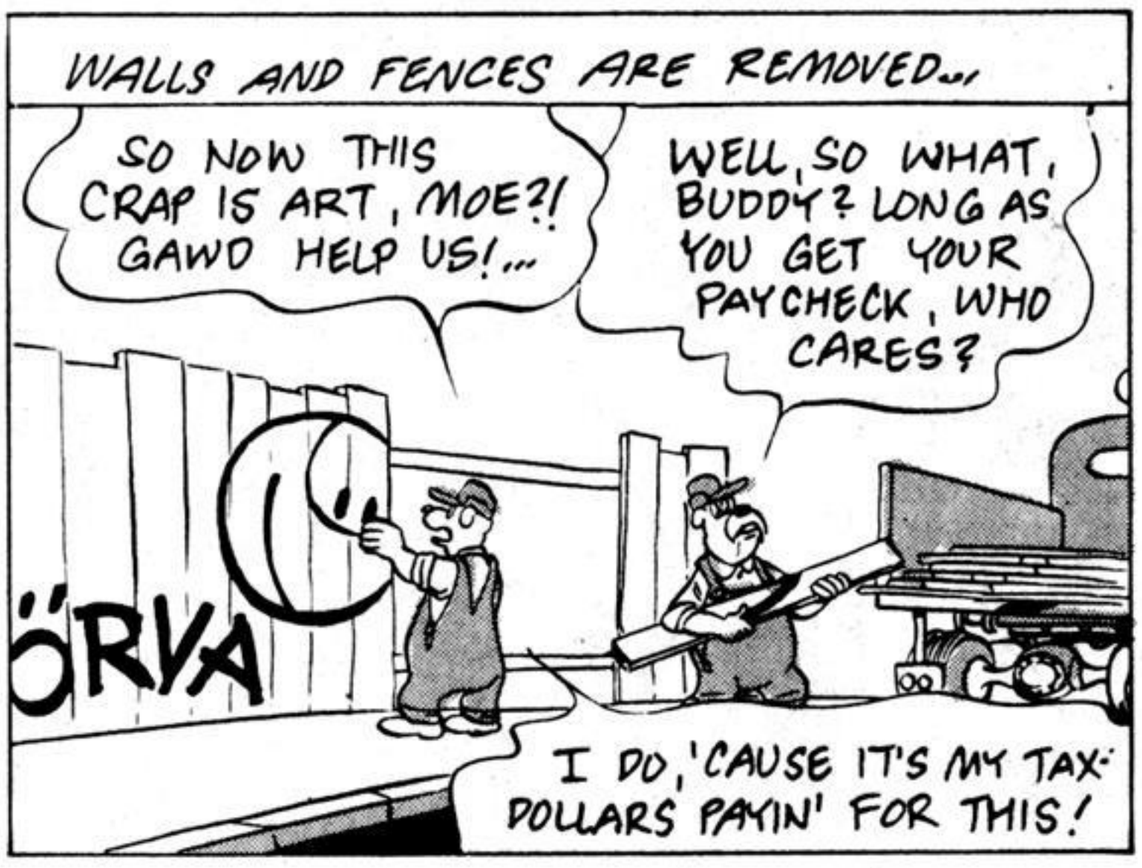
WHAT AH DO, AH DO FO' THUH LIVING ART! AH HAVE CONVINCED THUH BOA'D OF DIRECTUHS OF MAH MEW-SEUM, "ART BEATS", TUH GUARANTEE THE AMOUNT...
AND WHAT DOES THE LITIGANT HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THAT?

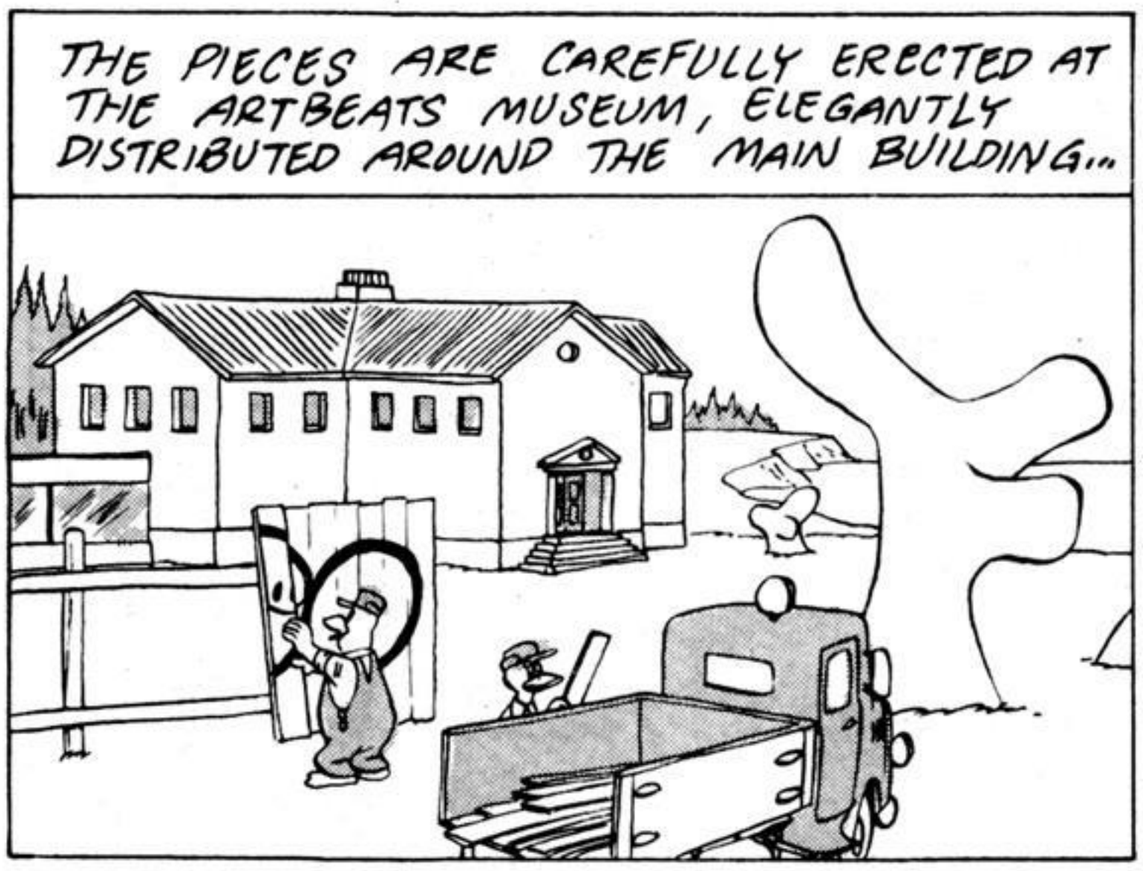
AHEM! INSOFAR AS THE PECUNIARY ASPECT OF THE CASE WAS THE DETERMINING ONE FOR OUR CLIENT, WE AGREE TO THE PROPOSAL...

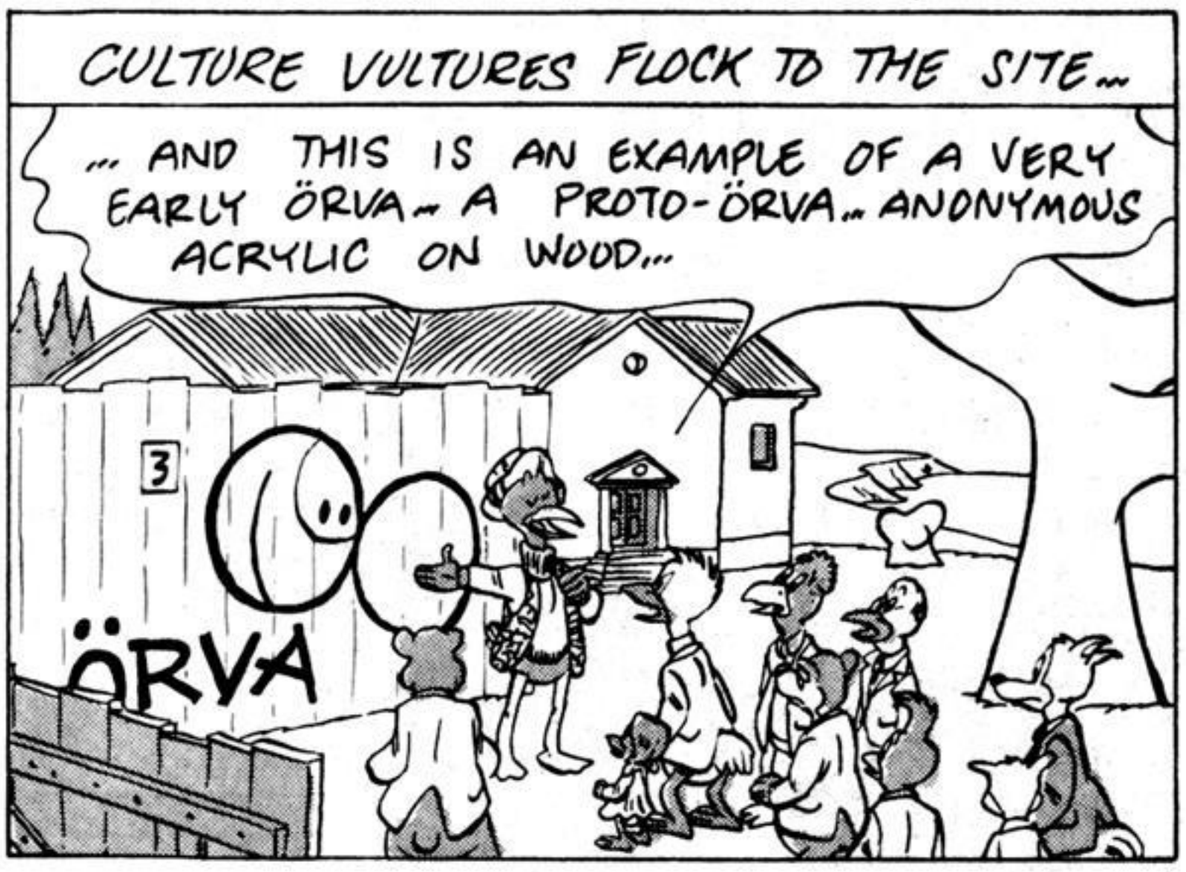

DID YOU HEAR THAT, YOU LOWLIFE ÖRVAS?! YOU OWE DR. HERRINGBONE A TREMENDOUS DEBT!
YOU SHOULD THANK HIM FOR HIS BENEVOLENCE !!!

THANK YOU DR. HERRINGBONE!
QUAT ALLRAHT DEAR CHIL-LUN!

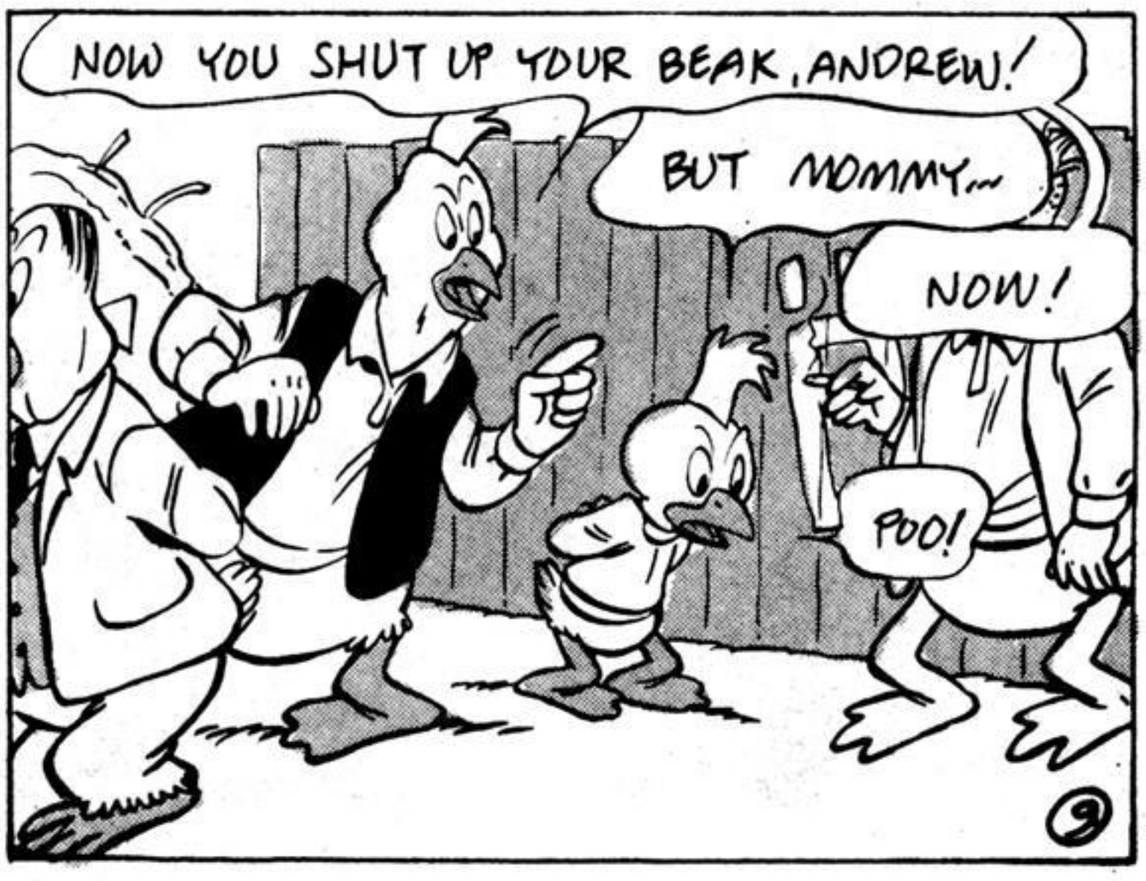

IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS BIG THINGS HAPPEN IN THE CITY...
ÖRVA

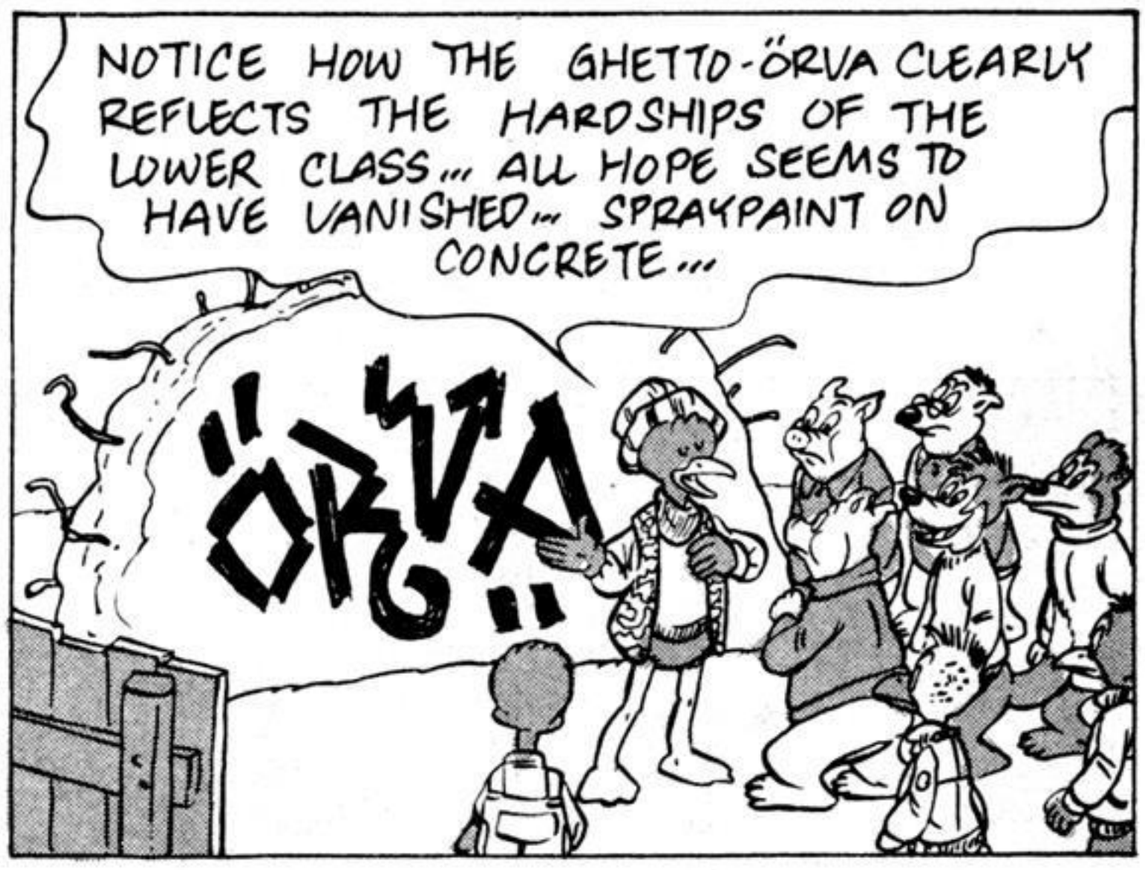

WALLS AND FENCES ARE REMOVED...
SO NOW THIS CRAP IS ART, MOE?! GAWD HELP US!...
WELL, SO WHAT, BUDDY? LONG AS YOU GET YOUR PAYCHECK, WHO CARES?
ÖRVA
I DO, 'CAUSE IT'S MY TAX-DOLLARS PAYIN' FOR THIS!

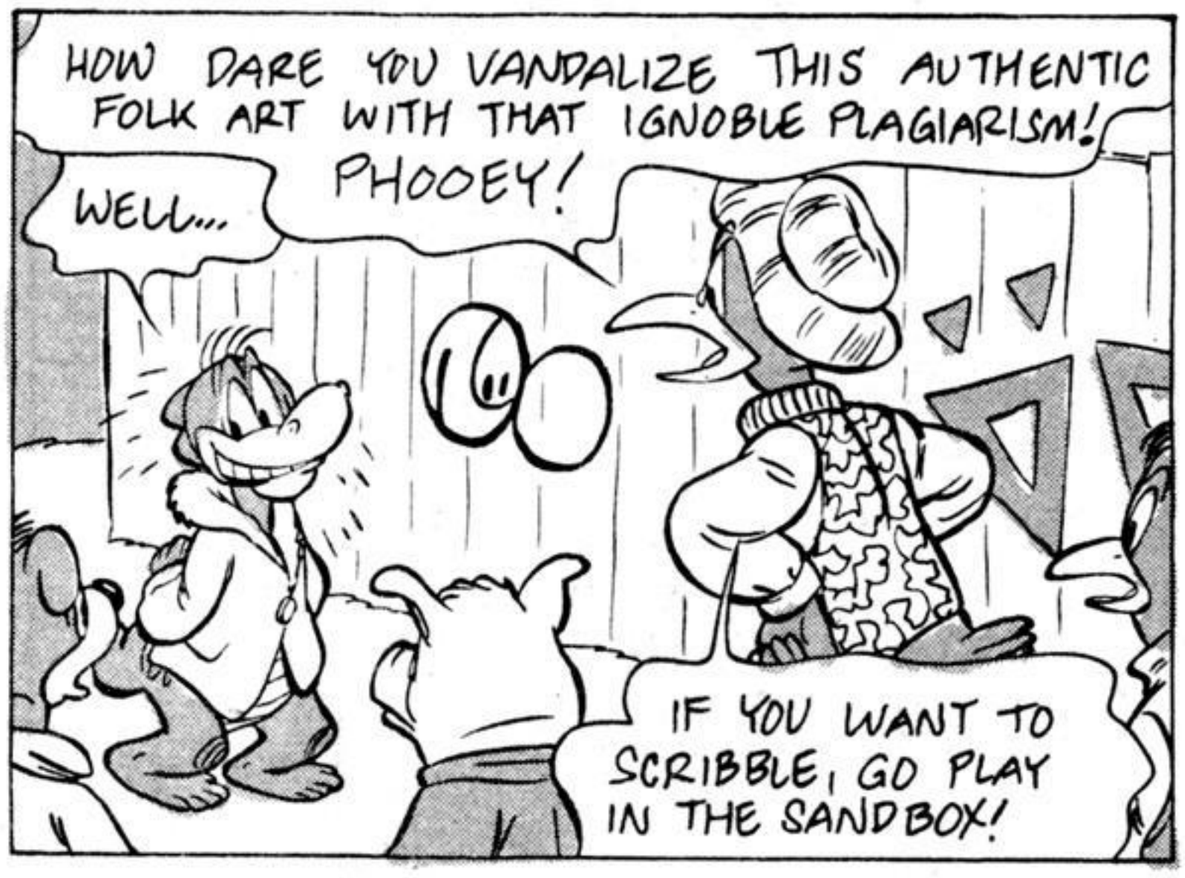

THE PIECES ARE CAREFULLY ERECTED AT THE ARTBEATS MUSEUM, ELEGANTLY DISTRIBUTED AROUND THE MAIN BUILDING...


CULTURE VULTURES FLOCK TO THE SITE...
... AND THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF A VERY EARLY ÖRVA... A PROTO-ÖRVA... ANONYMOUS ACRYLIC ON WOOD...
3
ÖRVA

MOMMY, I DRAWED THAT ONE THERE!
BE QUIET WHILE THE LADY IS TALKING!
BUT I DRAWED ...


NOW YOU SHUT UP YOUR BEAK, ANDREW!
BUT MOMMY...
NOW!
POO!





END

Milton-86

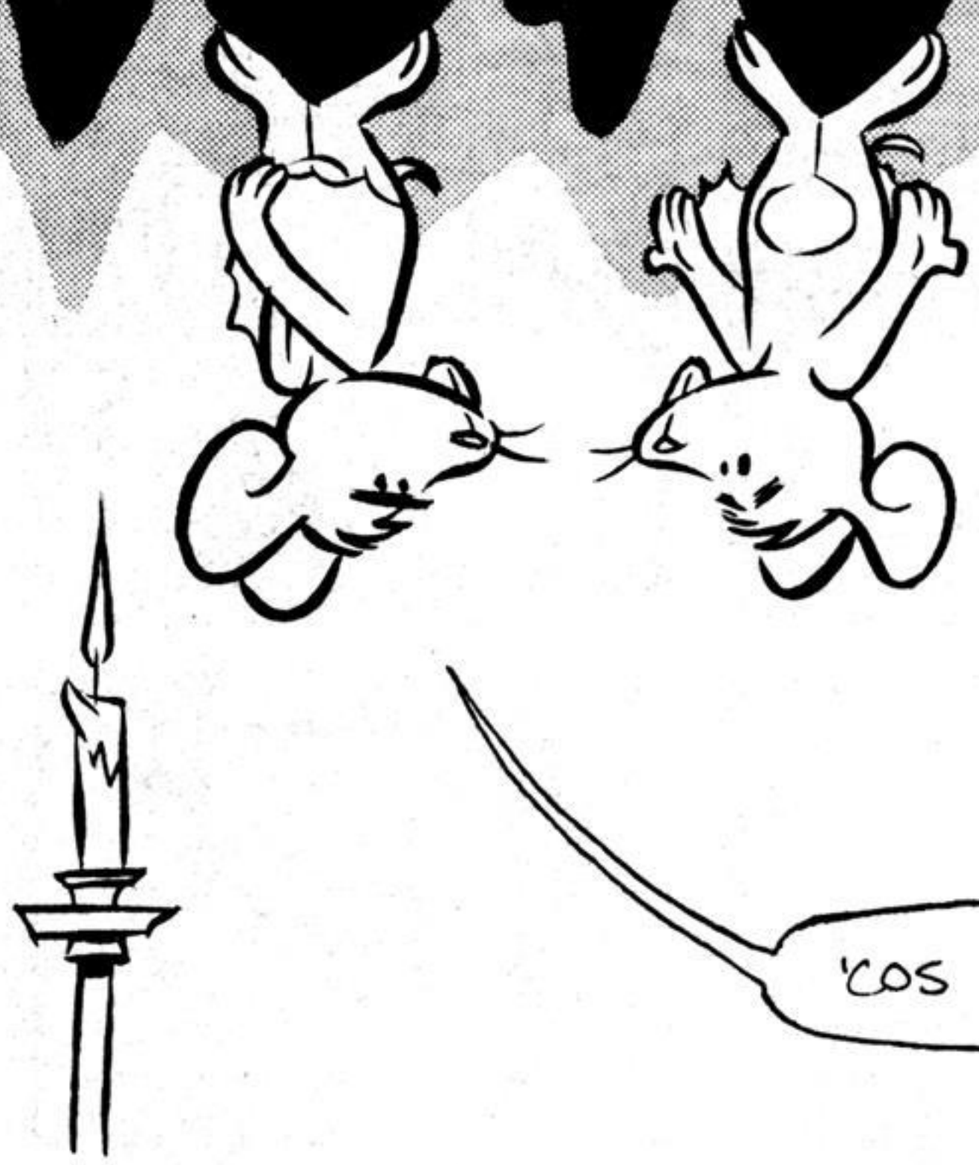
... BUT GNUFF RETURNS IN "FOR THE LOVE OF GNELLIE" IN CRITTERS #13!

D O G B O Y

DOG BOY.
RIZZZ
STEVE LAFLER
DOG BAG
DOG CHOY
DOG NOG
Egg Nog
DIG BIG
BOG DOG
DOOG BOOG!
DHEG BHEG
DERG BERG
LERG STERG
OLD FERD
DOIG BIRD
JEEP DURD.
BIG PIG
STUMP FIG
STOOG NUDE
OLD CHEESE
CUTE KNEES
LERF BEES
NICE TEASE
BENB
DHOOG SNOOD
OUR PRES-IDENT.
A JERK.

Santa Claus™ & the BATS!

by M. KAZAGH
1986

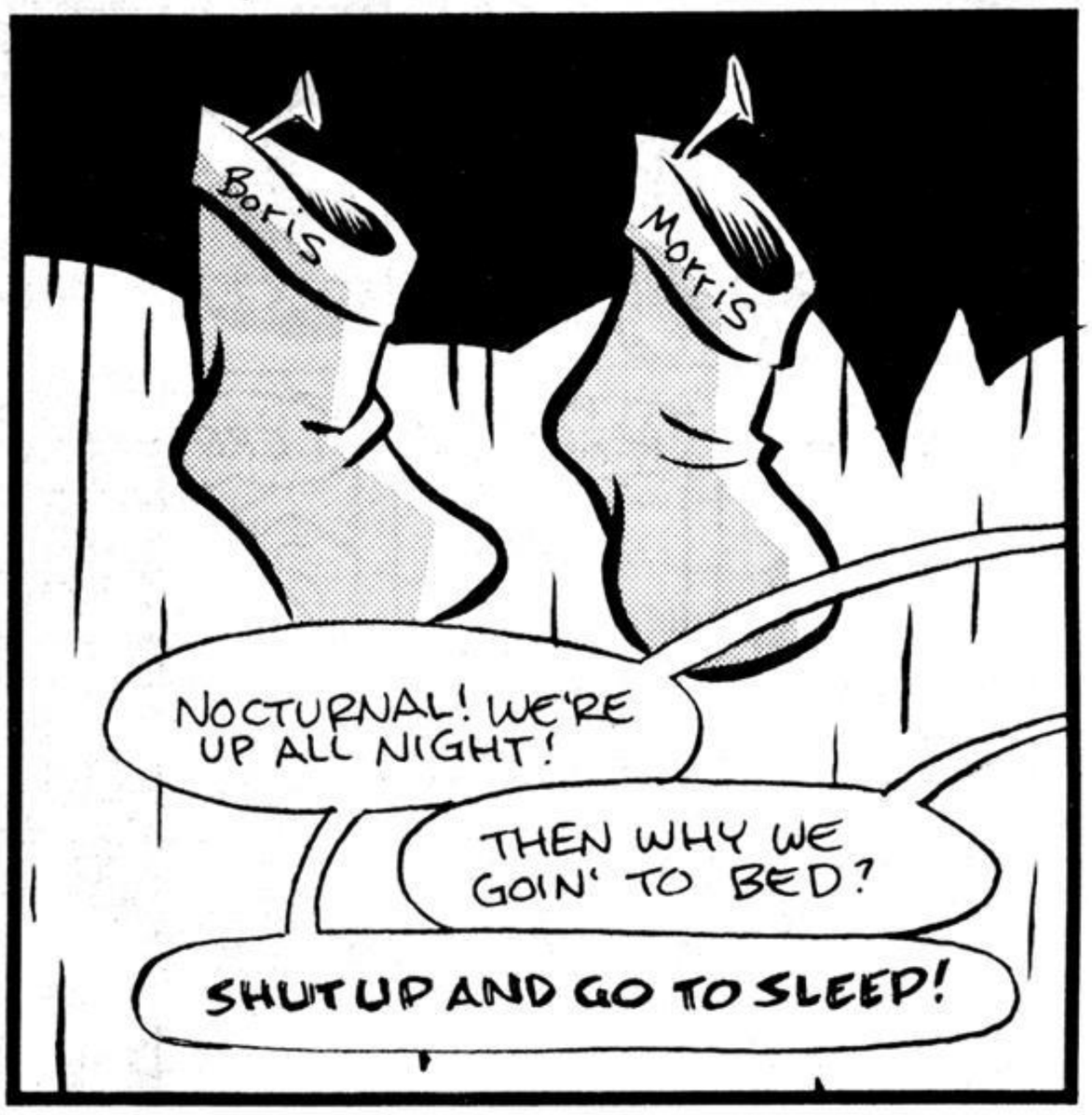


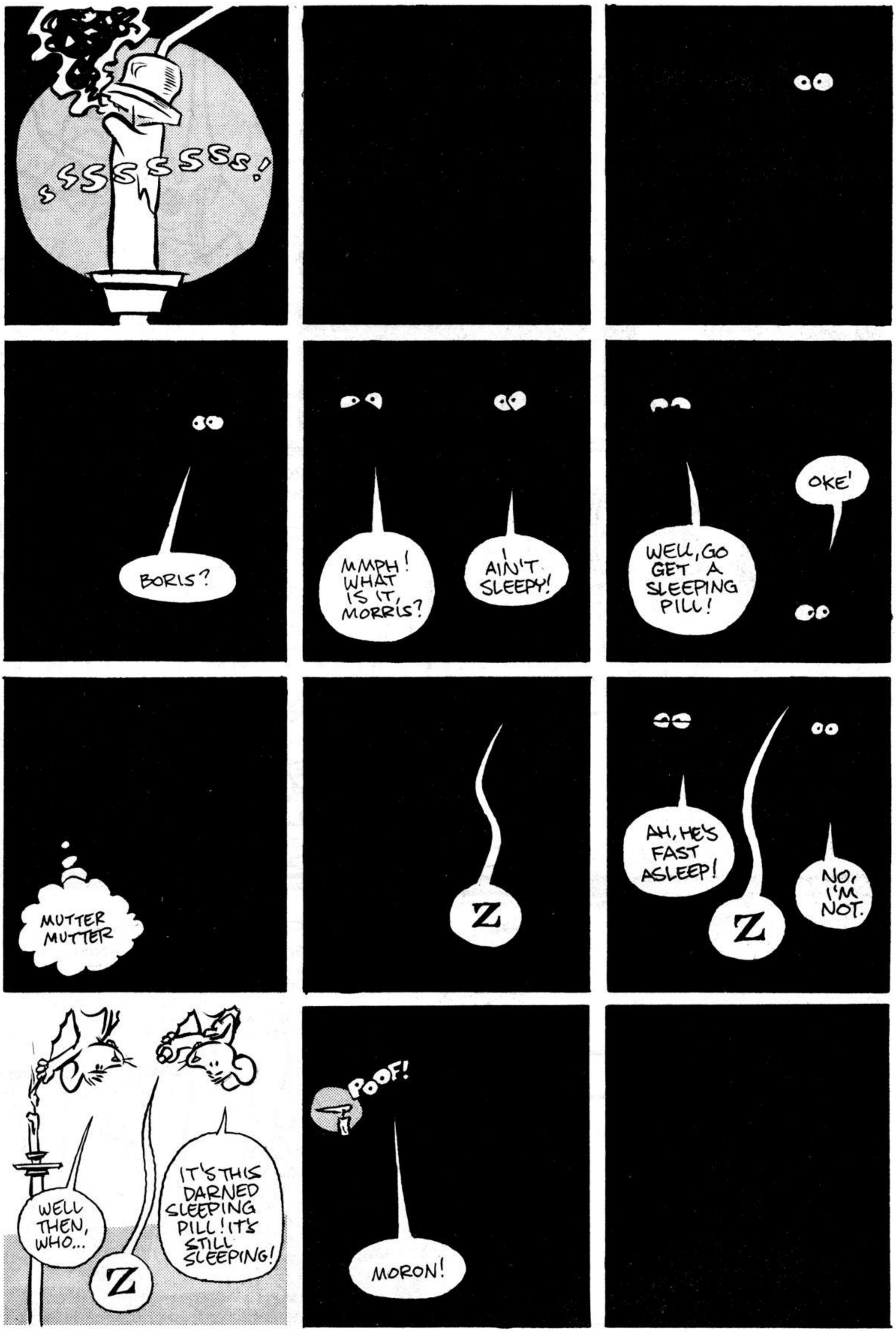
AW, GEE! WHY DO WE GOTTA GO TO SLEEP NOW? IT'S NIGHTTIME, AND BESIDES, WE JUST GOT UP!

'COS IT'S **CHRISTMAS** Y'DOPE!

EVERY YEAR SANTA PASSES US BY! I FIGURE IT'S BECAUSE BEING BATS, WE'RE NOCTURNAL CREATURES.

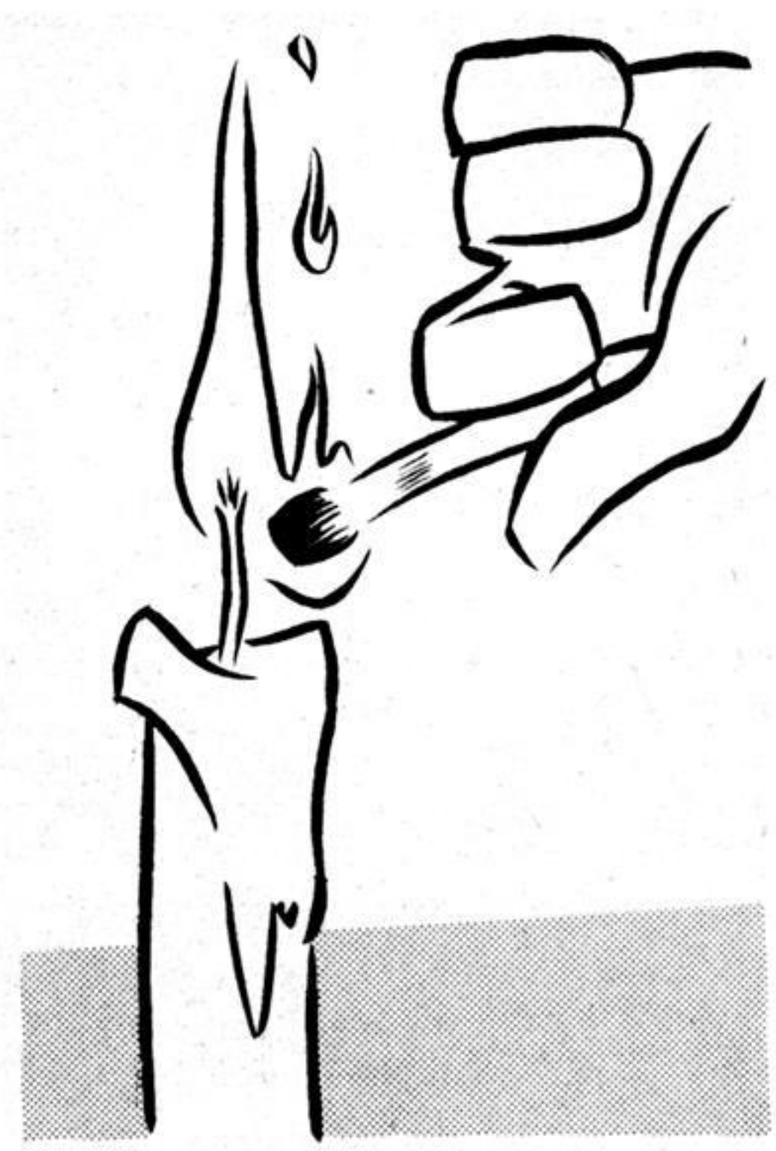
WE'RE **WHAT?!?**




SSSSSSS!
BORIS?
MMPH! WHAT IS IT, MORRIS?
I AIN'T SLEEPY!
WELL, GO GET A SLEEPING PILL!
OKE'
MUTTER MUTTER
Z
AH, HE'S FAST ASLEEP!
Z
NO, I'M NOT.
WELL THEN, WHO...
Z
IT'S THIS DARNED SLEEPING PILL! IT'S STILL SLEEPING!
POOF!
MORON!

DOES YOUR CHEWING-GUM LOOSE ITS FLAVOR ON THE STALAGTITE OVERNIGHT?
SHUT UP A MINUTE. LISTEN. DO YOU HEAR SOMETHING?
SCUFF

WHA...YEAH! I THINK THERE'S SOMEONE IN THE CAVE!
OH, BOY! I'LL LIGHT UP!
SCOFF SCUFFLE



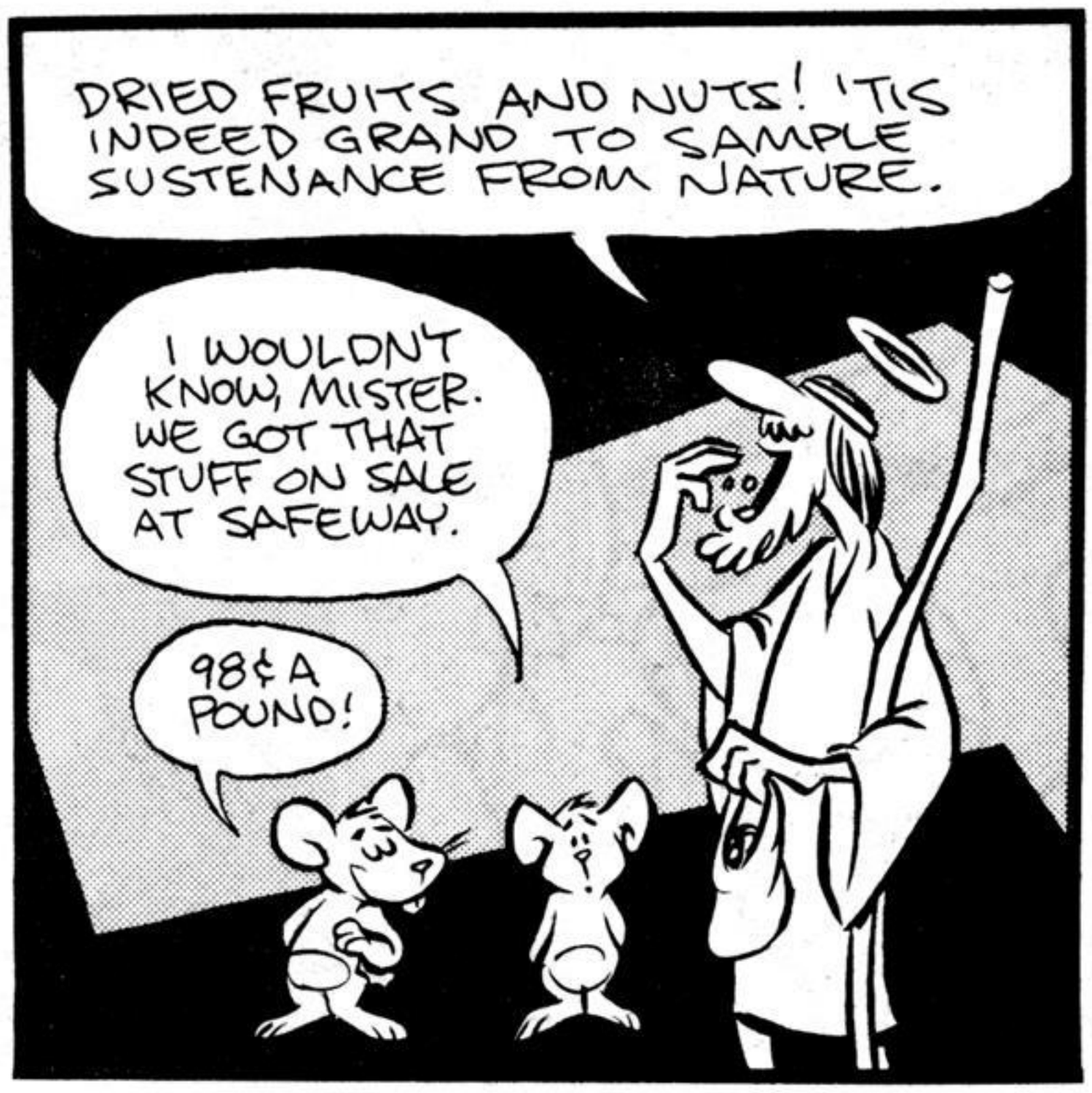
HE'S NOT ROSEY-CHEEKED AND BUTTON NOSED...
HE'S NOT WEARING A RED SUIT!

HIS BELLY DOESN'T SHAKE WHEN HE LAUGHS LIKE A BOWL FULL OF JELLY!
I'VE NEVER SEEN A BOWL OF JELLY LAUGH, HAVE YOU?

FORGIVE MY TRESPASSING, GOOD BATS. I THOUGHT THIS CAVE WAS UNOCCUPIED.

Sleepeth they all, our heroes and their gentle guest, 'til the sun bringeth the new day when the lodger announceth...

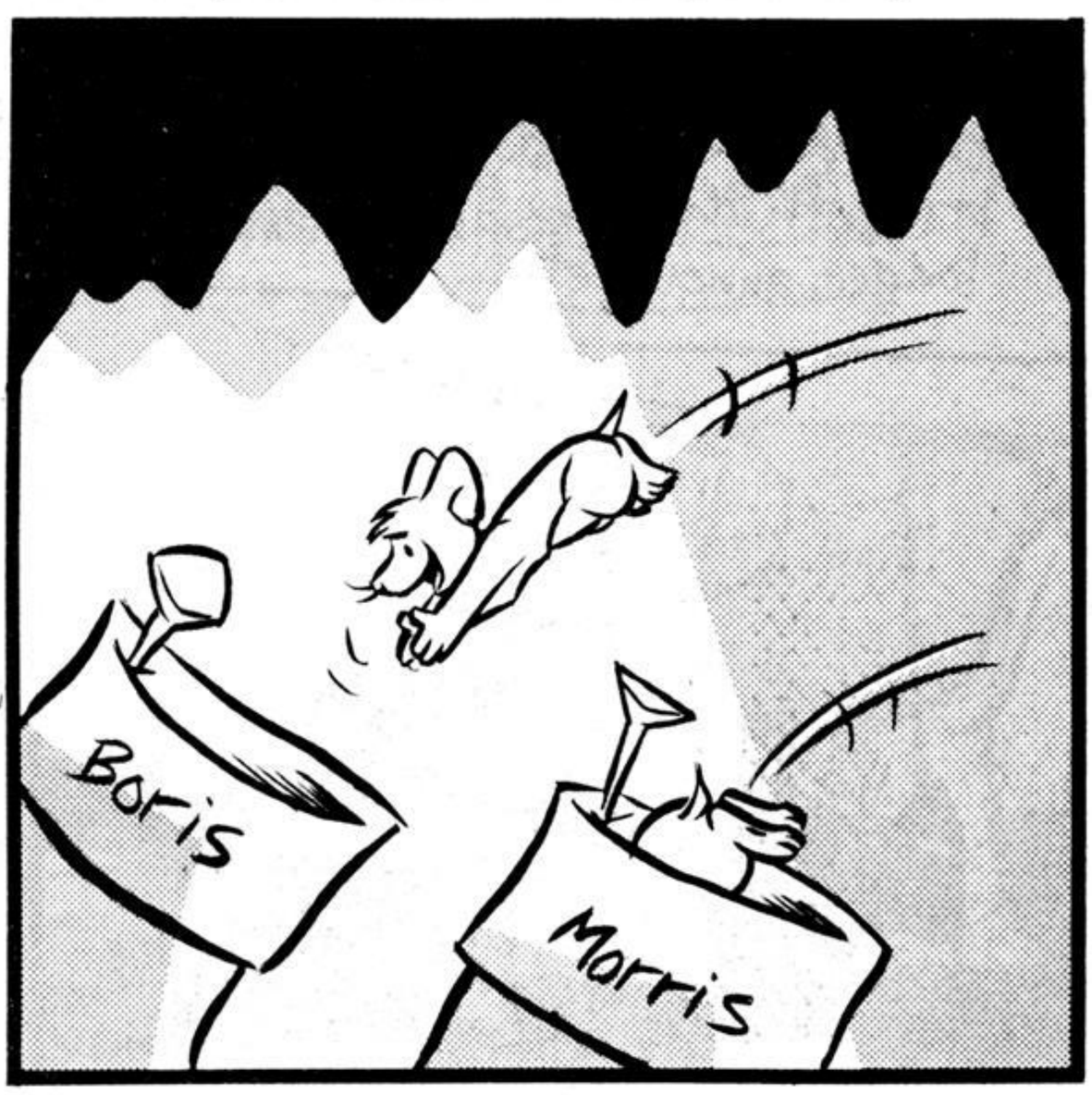
HANG ON, MATE. Y'MIGHT GET HUNGRY CROSSING THE DESERT. HERE'S SOMETHING YOU CAN MUNCH ON.

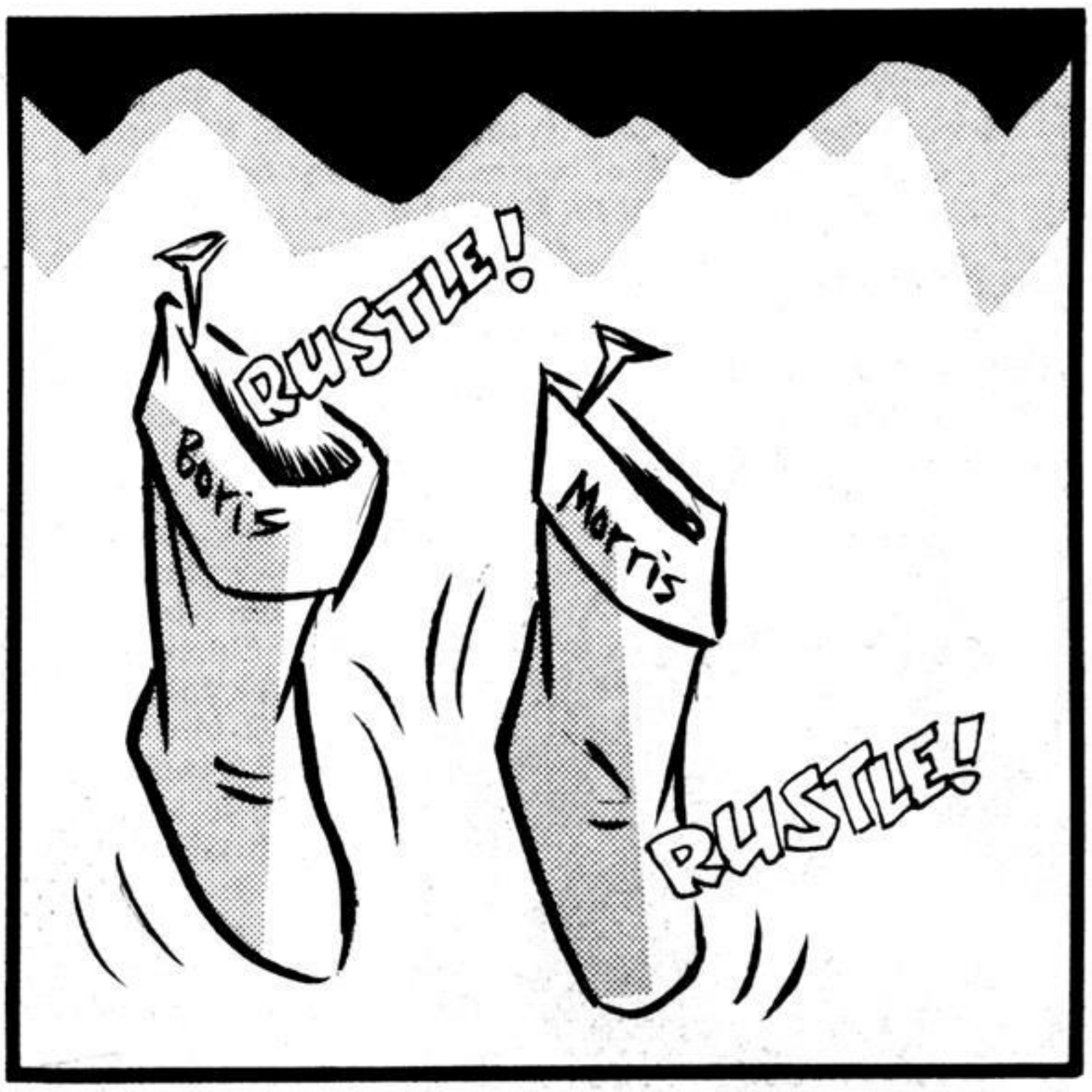

DRIED FRUITS AND NUTS! 'TIS INDEED GRAND TO SAMPLE SUSTENANCE FROM NATURE.
I WOULDN'T KNOW, MISTER. WE GOT THAT STUFF ON SALE AT SAFEWAY.
98¢ A POUND!

FAREWELL, GOOD BATS! I HOPE I MAY SOMEDAY REPAY YOUR KINDNESS!

THERE'S SOMETHING FAMILIAR ABOUT THAT EGG THAT I CAN'T PUT MY FUZZY LITTLE FINGER ON, MORRIS...
AIN'T IT PECULIAR HOW HIS BIRTHDAY IS ON CHRISTMAS?

CHRISTMAS! I NEARLY FORGOT! LET'S GO CHECK OUR STOCKINGS!
JEEPERS! LET'S GO!


Boris
Morris


RUSTLE!
Boris
Morris
RUSTLE!

NUTHIN'!
MINE, TOO!
Morris

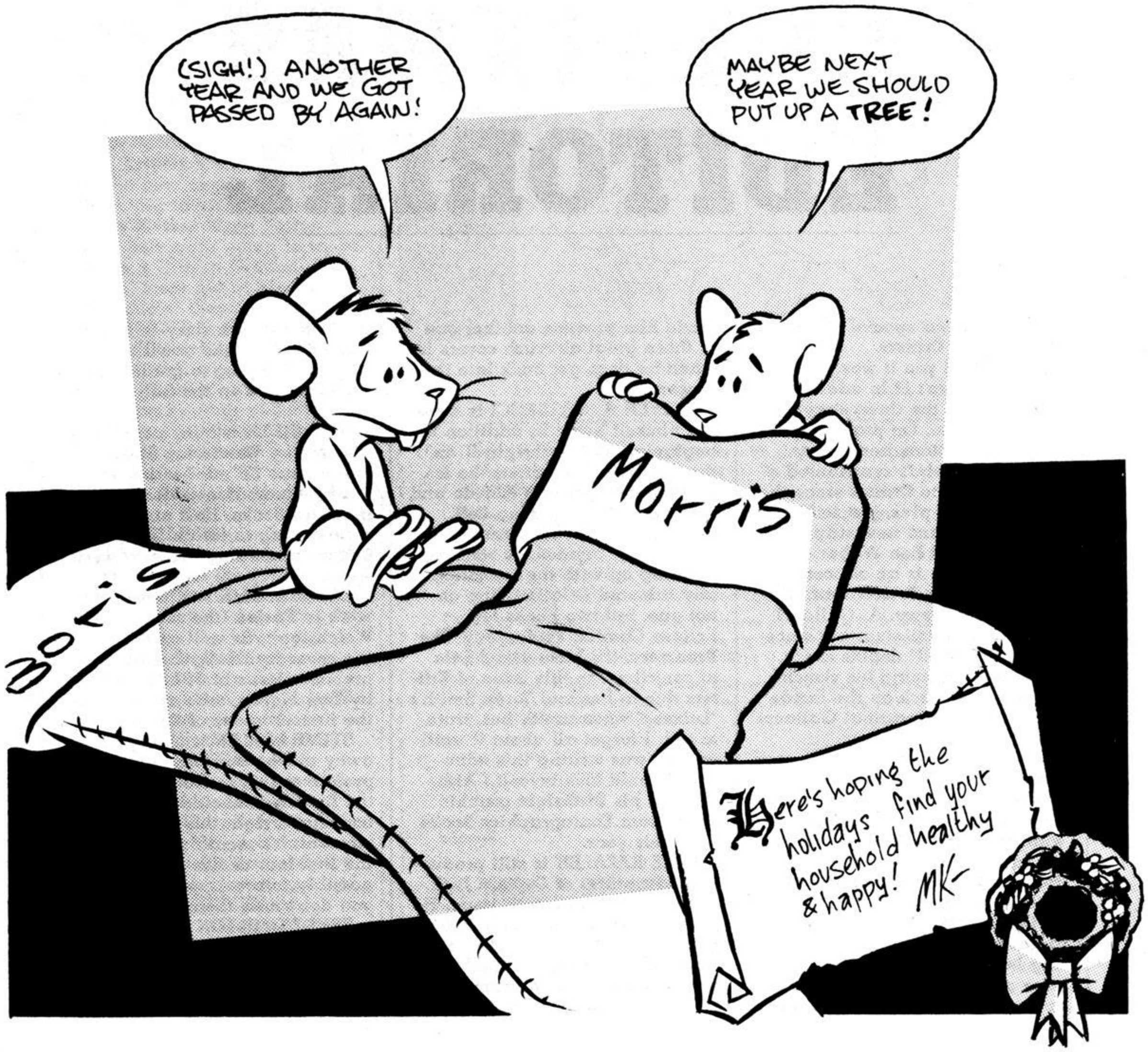

(SIGH!) ANOTHER YEAR AND WE GOT PASSED BY AGAIN!
MAYBE NEXT YEAR WE SHOULD PUT UP A TREE!
Morris
Boris
Here's hoping the holidays find your household healthy & happy! MK

Illustration by MARK ARMSTRONG

CHRISTMAS EDITORIAL

Welcome to our special Christmas issue of **Critters.**

Well, I **told** you it was going to be big, didn't I? In addition to wrapping up the three storylines from last issue, I'm proud to present contributions from every single artist who's contributed a strip or cover to **Critters** since the second issue—plus, just to keep us fresh, a brand new strip from J. Holland and Ron Wilber (the latter of whom is an old compadre from my **Comics Journal** days). Only Steven A. Gallacci is technically missing; but since his "Birthright II" debuts next issue, we're running his sketch for the cover back on the inside back cover—an original Gallacci piece!

Since letters have slowed down a considerable amount lately, I'll be using this letters page to do a quick summary of what the various **Critters** artists are up to these days. Support their work—even the stuff that isn't funny-animals!

MARK ARMSTRONG, after a hiatus from cartooning, is getting back in gear and hopes to have another "Firecracker Jack" episode any day now. Also, we made him promise another one of those great airbrush covers for when he does get back into the groove!

STEVEN A. GALLACCI is keeping himself busy: In addition to beginning his "Birthright II" in the next issue of **Critters**, he is writing and drawing **Albedo** and writing and co-drawing **Zell, Sworddancer** for his own Thoughts & Images, as well as teaming up with the sensationally talented Lela Dowling on not one, but two books for Eclipse Comics: **Fusion** and **The Dreamery**. (I'd have asked Lela to contribute to this issue of **Critters** due to her and Toren Smith's "Lobster" verse in **#5**, but, truth to tell, I forgot all about it until when I was writing this editorial. I could kick myself.) Also, look for his **Birthright** graphic novel from Fantagraphics Books later this year.

MIKE KAZALEH is still producing **Adventures of Captain Jack**, currently in its seventh issue. He is also working on a project for Ralph Bakshi, and will be coloring a special funny-animal project scheduled for the summer of 1987. Check out his coloring on the **Captain Jack** story in **Doomsday Squad #5** and you'll see why we're trying to get him to do more work in the full-color vein.

SAM KIETH is busy pencilling and inking **Wandering Stars**, a seven-issue SF mini-series written by Stuart Hopen, for Fantagraphics Books. He'll also be contributing to future issues of **Critters**, including the very next issue.

KEN MACKLIN will have some work in **Fusion** (the return of Dr. Watchstop!), as well as doing the cover for the upcoming premiere issue of **SPLAT!**, edited by Tom Mason, who art-directed the first 10 issues of **Critters.**

STEVE LAFLER is chugging away at **Dog Boy**, which premieres this month—in fact, the first issue should be at your newsstand right this very moment. It's monthly for at least the first four or five issues (and possibly forever), so watch out you don't miss them!

FREDDY MILTON is busily working away on a comics project for the great Danish toy manufacturer Lego, having just wrapped up his "For the Love of

Gnellie" serial. We will be starting up that epic romance in **Critters #13** (out in February); also scheduled for this Summer is a five-issue full-color **Gnuff** mini-series (presenting an epic 90-page Gnuff novel, with some special surprises thrown in)—and we're still talking to the People Who Own Woody Woodpecker (Walter Lantz sold him off a while ago) about the possibility of running some of Freddy's 400-plus Woody pages. Gladstone Comics has been publishing quite a few of the Freddy Milton/Daan Jippes Donald Duck ten-pagers in **Walt Disney's Comics and Stories**, and some of them are pretty wild.

STAN SAKAI is gearing up for the April release of **Usagi Yojimbo #1**, a new bi-monthly black-and-white comic starring you-know-who. Did we say bi-monthly? Actually, it will be monthly during the Summer, with **#3** scheduled to premiere at the Chicago Comic Convention, and **#4** at the San Diego Comic Con. (Stan's old friend Dennis Fujitake co-stars in the first issue, by the way, with a strip that's quite a departure for him.) In addition to this, May will see the release of **Usagi Yojimbo Book One**, a big square-bound volume reprinting the **Summer Special** and the first several **Critters** stories—with, of course, a new cover. Stan is also contributing to an upcoming **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles** project, and we're going to try to wheedle a "Nilson Groundthumper" story out of him for **Critters** one of these days too...

TOM STAZER is working away at **Spaced**, which he himself publishes (and which is distributed by Eclipse Comics). He is already formulating plans for the return of Lionheart, in a story which will continue the "Warner Bros. Babylon" sequence of the premiere, back in **#4**.

TY TEMPLETON was, at press-time, busy writing the patter for the presenters of the 1986 Juno Awards (the Canadian Grammies)—no, really! Also, he's gearing up for the January return of his **Stig's Inferno**, one of the world's funniest comics, now being published by Eclipse Comics. There's also rumors of a column for **Amazing Heroes**...

And RON WILBER is represented in the first issue of the aforementioned **SPLAT!**.

Next issue: The return of "Birthright" by Gallacci; a 10-page "Great Wa-Zoo" strip by Sam Kieth; and a swell special strip by REED WALLER and KATE WORLEY of **Omaha** fame. Also, viewer mail. Look for Steve's painted cover in the third week of January.

—KIM THOMPSON

CREDITS: "Usagi Yojimbo" was written and drawn by **Stan Sakai**. "Dinosaurs at the Bar" was written and drawn by **Ty Templeton**. "Chuck That Duck" was written and drawn by **Mark Armstrong**; the last three pages were inked by **Dennis Budd**. "Lionheart" was written and drawn by **Tom Stazer**. "Flying" was written by **J. Holland** and drawn by **Ronald Wilber**. "De Grand Wa-Zoo" was written and drawn by **Sam Kieth**. "Gnuff" was written, drawn, lettered, and toned by **Freddy Milton** and translated by **Kim Thompson**. "Dog Boy" was written and drawn by **Steve Lafler**. "Santa Claus and the Bats" was written and drawn by **Mike Kazaleh**. The editorial illustration was drawn (in 1979) by **Mark Armstrong**; the next issue art is by **Steven A. Gallacci**; the cover is a painting by **Ken Macklin**. Color separations by **S*M Graphics**. Printed at **Port Publications**. Production by: **Peppy White**, art director, and **Teresa Moore**, production assistant. **CRITTERS** is edited by **Kim Thompson** for **FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS**.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you'd subscribed before, this issue would have cost you only a buck and a half! **Adventures of Captain Jack, Critters**, and **Dog Boy** are all published regularly by Fantagraphics Books! And watch for our upcoming **Usagi Yojimbo** solo book in '87!

Illustration from "Birthright II" by STEVEN A. GALLACCI

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